Screen

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Volume 50   Number 1   Spring 2009

Screen Theorizing Today

A Celebration of *Screen*'s Fiftieth Anniversary

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**SCREEN THEORIZING TODAY
A CELEBRATION OF SCREEN'S FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY**

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cover illustration
Installation of *Zidane: un portrait du 21e siècle/Zidane: a 21st Century Portrait* (Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno, 2006) in the Daadgalerie, Berlin, 16 June–19 August 2008.

Screen and screen theorizing today

ANNETTE KUHN

Screen can lay claim to at least three, and perhaps as many as five, birthdays. The journal's beginnings may be dated first of all to the early 1950s, when an occasional mimeographed newsletter called *The Film Teacher* was launched under the banner of a newly formed membership organization calling itself the Society of Film Teachers.[1] *The Film Teacher* was eventually to evolve into a periodical with a new name, with the first issue under its present title, *Screen*, appearing early in 1969. However, we have chosen to mark the journal's birth year as 1959, for this was when the society – now more grandly and inclusively renamed the Society for Education in Film and Television (SEFT) – published the first issue of a print journal that has appeared regularly, and without breaks, ever since: an impressive achievement in itself. No more than a pamphlet, the 1959 inaugural issue declared a concern with 'the impact of the visual media upon the young', with 'our' [that is, teachers'] role being to interpret these media, since 'all children should be trained to be "intelligent viewers"'. The journal was called *Screen Education* (figure 1), and over the subsequent ten years, forty-five increasingly substantial numbered issues followed. By 1969, when the journal relaunched itself as *Screen* under new editorship, SEFT had become a grant-in-aid body of the British Film Institute (BFI).[2]

The Society's more established status is reflected in a boost in the journal's production values: in 1969, *Screen* looks professionally designed and printed, and runs to upwards of a hundred pages per issue (figure 2). The name change is clarified in the first editorial's claim that *Screen* intends 'to provide a forum in which controversial areas relevant to the study of film and television can be examined and argued. . . . At the same time, *Screen* will contain articles of considered criticism.' Among such articles in this issue are two on the work of the Hollywood director Arthur Penn, while the educational ('study of') remit is met by

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1 The first issue of *The Film Teacher* is dated 1952. Between that year and around 1958, some seventeen issues of the newsletter appeared.

2 *Screen Education: Journal of the Society for Education in Film and Television*, no. 1 (October 1959). The editors asserted *Screen*'s continuity with *Screen Education* by numbering the first issue under the new title vol. 10, no. 1 (1969). For further details of *Screen*'s history, and a listing of past editors, visit http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/screen/history/

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

contributions on film studies courses – not in schools but in a teacher training college and a college of further education (FE).[3] The latter serves as a reminder that in terms of pedagogy, film and television studies in the UK is rooted historically in the now defunct tradition of liberal education (in the form of programmes in General Studies, Related Studies or Complementary Studies) for FE students enrolled on day-release vocational and job training courses. The fact that liberal studies courses, and the students who (usually reluctantly) took them, were not as a rule

3 Jim Hillier, 'Arthur Penn', pp. 5–13; Terry Bolas, The left-handed gun of Arthur Penn', pp. 15–23; Roger Watkins, 'Film and television at Bulmershe', pp. 34–41; Elfreda Symonds, 'For film study at Hammersmith College of Further Education', pp. 42–66.

4 Ibid.

5 As advocated, for example, in two influential books of the time: Denys Thompson (ed.), *Discrimination and Popular Culture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964); Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel, *The Popular Arts* (London: Hutchinson, 1964).

6 S.R. [Sam Rohdie], 'Editorial', *Screen*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1971), p. 4.

7 Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni, 'Cinema/ideology/criticism', trans. Susan Bennett, *Screen*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1971), pp. 145–55: the quotation is on p. 14, and the 'elsewhere' referred to is *Cahiers*' rival journal, *Cinéthique*.

regarded as worthy of much attention meant that lecturers were free, more or less, to devise their own curricula. Elfreda Symonds's account, in the inaugural issue of the new *Screen*, of teaching film in a London FE college demonstrates what an engaged and sensitive teacher could achieve with this degree of freedom, and in the most unpromising of circumstances.[4] This contribution – and indeed the newly-launched *Screen* as a whole – also shows how closely pedagogy and scholarship are tied together in the establishment of screen studies as a distinct discipline, even though the relationship between the two would not always prove a comfortable one.

By 1969, though, it is clear that the teachers and lecturers involved in *Screen* and SEFT felt that their mission as educators depended on the formation of a teachable body of knowledge grounded in 'coherent criticism' of its objects. Besides being educators, many of these people were cinephiles; and many in turn rejoiced in, and laboured under, a love– hate relationship with popular cinema, and above all with Hollywood. Their teacherly mission was twofold: firstly to challenge the then prevailing high culture/mass culture critical divide by taking popular culture seriously as an object of study and a subject for teaching; and secondly to cultivate in their students – at this date more often than not among the 'rejects' of the formal education system – an informed and discriminating approach to popular media and entertainments.[5] Central to *Screen*'s history, then, is a love of cinema and an investment in promoting greater appreciation and understanding of films, combined with a desire, as part of that understanding, to encourage critical approaches to them. Some might regard this as a rather contradictory combination of objectives – and indeed the contradictions begin to become more evident in the moment of what later came to be known as '1970s *Screen* Theory'.

In 1971, and once again under fresh editorship, *Screen* embarked on a newly activist phase with an editorial manifesto declaring the journal's commitment 'to develop a politics of education and of film' based on 'an understanding of the object film' and 'the development of a methodology of some rigour'.[6] Along with the editorial, this substantial issue of the journal carried nine essays on the director Douglas Sirk and three articles translated from French, one of them being Jean-Louis Comolli's and Jean Narboni's *Cahiers du cinéma* essay, 'Cinema/ideology/criticism', a piece of writing that was to become hugely influential in anglophone film studies. This essay combined a commitment to theoretical rigour (and ideological correctness) with a tone at once combative and cowering that would become widely regarded, rightly or wrongly, as a hallmark of '1970s *Screen* Theory': 'This article', it begins, 'is chiefly a refutation of others which have appeared elsewhere, and might therefore appear to be of only transitory polemical interest'.[7] It is worth noting that Comolli's and Narboni's references are to Marx and Althusser more than to Freud and Lacan; and that their essay appeared two years or so ahead of the peak moment of *Screen*'s notorious love affair with psychoanalytic theory, or a certain version of it, between 1973 and 1975. It is worth

remembering, too, that even during these years the journal was also busily ploughing a number of non-psychoanalytic furrows, carrying translations from the 1920s Soviet journals *Lef* and *Novy Lef* alongside articles on Russian Formalism, early Soviet cinema, realism and Brecht, and well as some interesting, and in retrospect perhaps rather surprising, scholarly ventures into the industrial and technological history of Hollywood.

Among the key '*Screen* Theory' issues of the journal, though, is undoubtedly the 1973 double issue which included two long essays by Christian Metz and articles by Tzvetan Todorov and Julia Kristeva, all newly translated for the journal, along with a bibliography of Metz's published writings (figure 3).[8] This was followed in the next issue by an exegetical article on Metz by Stephen Heath and a translation of another *Cahiers du cinéma* article that was to prove highly influential, the collective piece on John Ford's *Young Mr Lincoln* (US, 1939) – the ur-text for the famous *Cahiers* 'category e' and thus for the ideological readings of classical Hollywood films that were to become prevalent in film studies. A translation by Ben Brewster, then *Screen*'s editor, of Metz's seminal 'imaginary signifier' essay appeared two years later, in an issue which also saw the journal's first, and somewhat grudging, engagement with feminist film theory, in the form of a short article by *Jump Cut*'s Julia Lesage challenging the phallocentrism of the psychoanalytic theory figuring thus far in the journal.[9] By way of response, the following issue carried Laura Mulvey's legendary manifesto and programmatic contribution to feminist film theory, 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', undoubtedly the most prolifically cited and widely reprinted article *Screen* has ever published–though between this date and the publication in 1982 of a double issue on sex and spectatorship, *Screen*'s engagement with feminist film theory remained rather sporadic.[10]

From today's standpoint, one is struck above all by the energy and commitment with which, during the mid 1970s, the journal grasped what it – rightly, in retrospect – regarded as a mission to create a new body of knowledge; a move that already by 1981 could be consolidated in some degree with the publication of the second *Screen* Reader, *Cinema and Semiotics*, which included reprints of articles on structuralist and ideological film analysis as well as a of number of essays by and about Metz, all from early 1970s issues of *Screen*.[11] However, this was by no means a smooth or straightforward process: in the summer of 1976, four members of the editorial board had stood down in protest at the direction being taken by the journal. Their complaint, significantly, was not only about the tone and content of *Screen* Theory, but also that the journal was no longer taking any real interest in education.[12] Nonetheless, by the latter years of the 1970s there were already signs of a change of direction in *Screen*, with a more eclectic mix of articles, fewer special issues, more material on television and on independent, avant-garde and other non-mainstream cinemas, less on Hollywood, and less, too, on

8   *Screen*, vol. 14, nos 1–2 (1973).

9   Christian Metz, 'The imaginary signifier', trans. Ben Brewster, pp. 14–76, and Julia Lesage, 'The human subject: you, he or me?', pp. 77–83, both *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 2 (1975).

10   Laura Mulvey, 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 3 (1975), pp. 6–18. The same issue carried short articles on feminist film criticism by Annette Kuhn and Claire Johnston. Special double issue, 'Sex and spectatorship', *Screen*, vol. 23, nos 3–4 (1982).

11   Society for Education in Film and Television, *Screen Reader 2: Cinema and Semiotics* (London: SEFT, 1981).

12   Edward Buscombe, Christine Gledhill, Alan Lovell and Christopher Williams, 'Why we have resigned from the board of *Screen*', *Screen*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1976), pp. 106–9.

13 From the early 1970s until 1982, a second series of *Screen Education*, dealing specifically with screen studies curricula and pedagogy and aimed mainly at teachers in schools and FE, was published in parallel with *Screen*.

14 Mary Ann Doane,' 'Aesthetics and politics', *Signs*, vol. 30, no. 1 (2004), pp.1229–35.

15 D W Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Tavistock, 1971).

psychoanalysis. This same period also saw a shift towards the deployment of screen theory (now, perhaps, more anodynely, without the initial capitals and italics) as a form of political modernism, and in conjunction with praxis–though at this point a praxis not so much of education and pedagogy as of filmmaking.[13]

If this introduction rehearses *Screen*'s past, it does so in order to assess the state of screen (and indeed *Screen)* theorizing today, in circumstances so radically different from those of fifty years ago when a body of knowledge called screen studies could scarcely be imagined – even thirty years ago the discipline was still very much in process of formation. We are now in less uncertain (and somewhat less exciting) times, and the idea of a unitary discipline grounded in an all-embracing screen theory no longer fits the case, if indeed it ever did. On the contrary – and perhaps in reaction to the excesses of the era of militant theory – screen studies seems increasingly to comprise a concatenation of subdisciplines, in which a focus on the historical, the local and the specific flourishes and any ambitions to create a totalizing theory are eschewed.[14] To a considerable extent, this retreat from Grand Theory has entailed a wholesale distaste for the essential activity of conceptualization, of *theorizing*.

The gerund is used advisedly: the idea of theoriz*ing* suggests process, an activity that is open and continuing rather than closed off or static. Today we may more appropriately imagine not a hypostatized '*Screen* Theory', but an open and interactive process of screen theorizing. An apt analogy here is the object-relations psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott's insistence, in his writings on the negotiation of outer and inner lives in the transitional objects and spaces of childhood, on the idea of *playing* (as opposed to *play*). For Winnicott, this negotiation is a prototype for the cultural experiences and creativity of adult life.[15] Perhaps, then, we can think about screen theorizing as being a little like playing; a shift of perspective that would certainly take away some of the anxiety that so often accompanies talk about *Screen* Theory – and even screen theory. With this in mind, we can take a fresh look at *Screen'*s role in screen theorizing – at how this has changed, and continues to change today.

What, first of all, is the point of this activity of theorizing? What is theorizing for? Basically, theorizing ought to equip us with tools for thinking about, understanding and explaining the objects with which a body of knowledge concerns itself. Ideally, theorizing should also take on board any shifts or changes in those objects. In screen studies, what we are seeking to explain or understand, very broadly speaking, are the moving image screen or screens, what is displayed on these screens, and the nature of our encounter with them. In thinking about these things, we may focus variously on the screen itself, on our mental processes, on our bodies, or on the heterogeneous 'surround'. This is a wide-ranging remit. Moreover, what we are seeking to understand or explain is not only diverse but also in a process of changing and becoming. The current

conventional wisdom in screen studies has it that today's rapidly changing technologies of moving image delivery and sites and modes of consumption of moving image screens must entail a shift in our disciplinary objects. While a certain scepticism on the latter point is advisable, it is certainly the case that in any field of knowledge disciplinary objects are never fixed for all time. If the object changes, then, what happens to the theorizing? To what extent, *per contra*, might the activity of theorizing alter or reframe a discipline's objects? In screen studies, to what extent do shifts in the screenscape enjoin us to devise new theoretical frameworks, force us to ask new questions of old ones, or even invent new ways of theorizing?

In his contribution to this Anniversary issue, Thomas Elsaesser reminds us that cinema and psychoanalysis are contemporaries and rivals. And indeed the glory, and the burden, of *Screen*'s activist years is undoubtedly its embrace, in the quest to understand (and perhaps undo) cinema's particular appeal, of psychoanalysis. The original object of psychoanalytic film theory is cinema as a distinctive screen medium, and its aim is to build a framework for understanding how cinema engages spectators at the level of the psyche, the inner world, and to map cinema's evocation of Unconscious mental processes. At its highest level of abstraction, psychoanalytic film theory sets out a metapsychology of cinema, a framework for conceptualizing the psychodynamics at work in the encounter between the cinema screen and the spectator. Although 'cinepsychoanalysis' is currently out of favour, even in today's changing screenscape the fundamental issue of the screen–spectator/user interaction remains central to theorizing in screen studies.

Drawing on 'French Freud', *Screen*'s early ventures in psychoanalytic film theory followed the idea of spectatorship (as looking) through theorization of vision as a constituent of the sexual or libido drives. This ocularcentric appropriation of psychoanalysis (especially in conjunction with ideological readings of classical Hollywood films and via feminist film theory's focus on the gendered gaze) channelled energy, both inside and outside *Screen*, into theorizations of sexual difference in cinema, and thence into issues of identity and visual pleasure. Eventually the phenomena seeking explanation exceeded the explanatory capacity of psychoanalytic theory, and a dead end was arrived at. But in a roundabout way, the ensuing retreat from psychoanalytic film theory throws into relief the continuing relevance of its central metapsychological preoccupation; a preoccupation that has in certain respects lately been redirected into a phenomenological concern with conceptualizing and capturing the *experience* of cinema (and of certain other moving image media) as it is lived. The phenomenological turn in screen studies manifests itself most influentially in the currently widespread reference to Gilles Deleuze's cinema-inspired philosophy.[16] It is perhaps a matter of regret that this has eclipsed the phenomenological strand in the thinking of postwar *Cahiers* critic André

16 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: the Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone Press, 1986); Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: the Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Athlone Press, 1989).

17 On revisiting Metz, see Richard Rushton, 'Cinema's double: some reflections on Metz', *Screen*, vol. 43, no. 2 (2002), pp.107–18; on Bazin as phenomenologist see Annette Kuhn, 'Thresholds: film as film and the aesthetic experience', *Screen*, vol. 46, no. 4 (2005), pp. 401–14.

Bazin, a hitherto largely disregarded influence which in turn is apparent also in Metz's semiotic and psychoanalytic writings on film and cinema. The time is surely ripe for revisiting Bazin's and Metz's work with a reframed theorization of screen metapsychology in mind.[17]

There is no denying, however, that changes in the ways in which cinema is produced and films are consumed have delivered a particular challenge to psychoanalytic film theory. In a moment characterized by some commentators as 'post-cinema', is it possible any longer to conceive of cinema as a distinct and separate screen medium, and thus to pursue the notion of cinematic specificity that grounds classic psychoanalytic film theory? Even if it is not (and this is contentious, as a number of contributions to this volume propose), there is clearly still a place within screen studies for theorizing and analyzing media *texts* – including and especially films. The essays in Part 1 of this collection, 'Spectatorship and Looking', engage with questions around spectatorship and looking central to classic *Screen* psychoanalytic film theory, tackling the challenge posed by today's plurality of, and modes of engagement with, screens. The suggestion is that there could be a place in today's screen theorizing for a friendlier, a more modest, 'cinepsychoanalysis', a tool rather than an orthodoxy or a straitjacket – an approach that offers the means, in Rob Lapsley's words, to 'continue the work of the text by other means'; and that, even accepting the notion of a 'post-medium condition', there is still some gain, in terms of theorizing, to be obtained from reframing psychoanalysis for any renewed conceptualization of moving image media. Stephanie Marriott's essay, for instance, raises the question of how spectatorial address might be reframed in relation to the contemporary television screen, with its 'dense image field' and 'multiple and diverse sites of address'. With regard to cinema, Lapsley sets out a somewhat Winnicottian formulation of the screen–spectator relationship, suggesting that artworks, including certain types of film, can give and receive form: that the spectator, in other words, can be at once receptive and form-giving. Moving outwards from the 'French Freud' of classic psychoanalytic film theory, Vicky Lebeau, in her proposal of a new approach to 'the art of looking' in cinema, explicitly invokes object-relations psychoanalysis, referencing Winnicott's thinking on vision and on our capacity to 'lose the self' in the realm of the visible.[18] For his part, Richard Rushton tackles the task of shifting classic psychoanalytic conceptualizations of cinema spectatorship away from a narrow ocularcentrism, whilst taking on board issues of affect, sensation and corporeality opened up by phenomenological approaches, Deleuze's in particular, to the metapsychology of cinema.

18 On object-relations psychoanalysis and film theory, see Ira Konigsberg, 'Transitional phenomena, transitional space: creativity and spectatorship in film', *Psychoanalytic Review* vol. 83, no. 6 (1996), pp. 865–89; for an object-relations-inspired approach to film analysis, see Suzy Gordon, '*Breaking the Waves* and the negativity of Melanie Klein: rethinking "the female spectator"', *Screen*, vol. 45, no. 3 (2004), pp. 206–25.

As we have seen, the phenomenological turn in screen theorizing presents us with the possibility of thinking the screen–spectator/user interface in terms of lived experience. One of the dictionary definitions of 'experience' stresses the aspect of discovery or knowing through feeling

or undergoing—through suffering, in the older sense of the word. This implies an encounter of some kind; and the contributions to Part 2, 'The screen experience', explore the experiential encounter, in a changing screenscape, with the moving image screen and with the worlds it presents, frames, or contains as these engage the senses, the body, the emotions. Francesco Casetti argues that 'experience' may be understood as a state of openness to something that 'captures' us, a state that we can then parlay into a knowledge, a competence, or a mastery, and that posits a distinct category of filmic experience. In thus reframing and extending the notion of screen spectatorship, Casetti pushes at both psychoanalytic and phenomenological conceptualizations of the screen/user encounter without departing from either; and in this sense his argument begins where Rushton's leaves off. The idea of filmic experience, claims Casetti, offers an aid to understanding not only the history of cinema but also the altered screenscapes of the present and the future. John Ellis's essay on 'witness' and the televisual encounter proposes that actualities screened on television offer a mode of address that is peculiar to the medium and the genre–a call to witness. Because this rhetoric does not propose any actual behavioural response or action on the part of the spectator/user, Ellis argues, an ethical dimension is necessarily introduced into the screen/user encounter.

Referencing Deleuze, Martine Beugnet and Elizabeth Ezra's essay returns to a purposive exploration of the phenomenology of the screen experience. The authors offer a reading of Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno's film *Zidane: un portrait du 21e siècle/Zidane: a 21st Century Portrait* (2006) that emphasizes the particularities of a sensuously immersive kind of viewing experience, arguing that the film constitutes a 'formidable exercise in haptic visuality'. Haptic visuality has been defined as 'a kind of seeing that uses the eye like an organ of touch' by Laura U. Marks,[19] whose own contribution to the present collection extends her thinking on the phenomenology of cinema to embrace the Deleuzian 'fold'. The 'enfolding-unfolding aesthetics' that Marks posits here follows what she regards as a cultural shift away from vision and visibility and towards information.

Marks's new 'aesthetics for cinema' is inspired by the idea that today the images that present themselves to our senses are basically the effects of the information that generates them. In his contribution to Part 3, 'After cinema', Thomas Elsaesser likewise draws attention to the significance for screen studies of the transformations in data flows brought about by the digital revolution. He looks at the changed relationship between the input/recording, storage, processing and retrieval of information, noting that data generation 'is no longer conceivable solely on the analogue model of trace and imprint'. A crisis in our understanding of cinema follows from this, he argues; and classic psychoanalytic film theory's emphasis on vision and identity no longer seems appropriate for the age of information transmission and transcoding. Elsaesser's reframing of

19 Laura U. Marks, 'Haptic visuality: touching with the eyes', *Framework: the Finnish Art Review*, no. 2 (2004), http://www.framework.fi/2_2004/visitor/artikkelit/marks2.html [accessed 2 January 2009]; see also Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and the Senses* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

20 See, for example, Raymond Bellour, 'Battle of the images', trans. L-S Torgoff, in Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel (eds), *Future Cinema: the Cinematic Imaginary After Film* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), pp. 56–9.

21 Recent *Screen* articles on gallery films include Catherine Fowler, 'Room for experiment: gallery films and vertical time from Maya Deren to Eija Liisa Ahtila', *Screen*, vol. 45, no. 4 (2004), pp. 324–43.

22 See, for example, Sue Clayton and Jonathan Curling, 'On authorship', *Screen*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1979), pp. 35–61; Peter Gidal, 'The anti-narrative', *Screen*, vol. 20, no. 2 (1979), pp. 73–93; Claire Johnston, 'The subject of feminist film theory/practice', *Screen*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1980), pp. 27–34; Felicity Oppé, 'Exhibiting *Dora*', *Screen*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1981), pp. 80–85. At an event held at Tate Modern in November 2008 to launch *Screen*'s fiftieth anniversary celebrations, this aspect of the journal's work was discussed: for details visit http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/eventseducation/film/16142.htm [accessed 2 January 2009].

Freud for the information age highlights the effectiveness with which changes in the screenscape can pose new questions to, and find fresh answers in, 'old' theoretical frameworks. This line of argument allows Elsaesser to propose, among other things, an intriguing and unexpected fresh direction for feminist screen theory.

In highlighting the mutability of, and interchanges between, modes and objects of theorizing, the essays in Part 3 also track a shift of focus within screen theorizing away from mainstream screen media and towards more marginal, subaltern or experimental moving image genres, venues and formats. Contributions here include references to documentary, world cinema, art films, and moving image installations in art galleries and museums – all of which have seen a rise in cultural visibility and accessibility in recent years. Today, moving image works and artists mix genres, formats, platforms and venues, a phenomenon that Ji-hoon Kim, following Raymond Bellour, calls crossbreeding.[20] For example, a moving image work like Gordon and Parreno's *Zidane*, analyzed essentially as a cinema film by Beugnet and Ezra in their contribution to Part 2, enjoys another life as a dual-screen art gallery installation piece; while another artist–filmmaker, Steve McQueen, can negotiate a different kind of passage between gallery and cinema auditorium, entering the domain of social art cinema with his recent award-winning film *Hunger* (2008). In her essay on documentary sounds and images in the gallery, Elizabeth Cowie discusses, among other works, Kutlug Ataman's *Kuba* (2005), an installation presented on forty television screens featuring talking-head interviews with inhabitants of the town of Kuba in Turkey. Cowie looks at how the installation's multiscreen setup and site specificity engage the spectator/visitor in a particular kind of relationship with the exhibition space – making possible a new awareness of the interviewees, and their stories, as a community.[21]

The 'gallery film' and its offshoots inside and outside the gallery often appear to enact and embody, even overtly to draw inspiration from, certain forms of screen theorizing, as well as vice versa. It is in this area above all, perhaps, that the interconnections between screen theorizing and visual cultural practice present themselves in a new form for the 'post-cinema' age. This calls to mind *Screen*'s interventions, from the mid to late 1970s and into the 1980s, in a 'theoretical practice' of film, which took the form of an ongoing dialogue with practising filmmakers from both the visual art avant garde and the radical wing of the independent filmmaking sector.[22] Dale Hudson's and Patricia R. Zimmermann's essay in Part 3 on 'collaborative remix zones' takes up the lately somewhat neglected cause of oppositional cinema and runs with it into the 'post-cinema' age, setting out a manifesto for a postcapitalist, politicized, oppositional multimedia performance practice – the 'collaborative remix zones' of their essay's title – as well as for a post-cinema cinephilia that embraces pluralities of pasts, temporalities

and voices, all with the aim to 'reclaim the public sphere' from screen media corporations.

In the post-cinema age, the task of theorizing the shape-shifting moving image experience seems urgent. Does a moving image installation in a gallery in some way reinstate the auratic quality of the unique artwork? What kind of metapsychology is proposed in the encounter with a moving image work that takes place in an 'architecture' of time, place and space very different from that of the cinema auditorium, or indeed of the domestic living room – a site where, as Cowie puts it, we are faced with a 'mobile spectator in a specific historical space and time'? And in an era of proliferating screen formats, genres and platforms, is it any longer possible, asks Kim, to hold to a concept of medium specificity – and especially to continue to regard cinema as a discrete kind of aesthetic object, and a distinct object of cinephilic desire? And to what extent, ask Hudson and Zimmermann, can cinephilia depend on the 'aura' of the rare print and the once-in-a-lifetime screening, now that so much of world cinema is available on DVD or to download? Kim's conclusion is that 'after cinema', the equivalence between, and the increased availability of, different media texts, formats and venues actually allows for a more searching inquiry into the nature of the cinematic experience; while Hudson's and Zimmermann's is that the 'little madnesses' of the pre-post-cinema cinephile can translate into a post-cinema mania for collecting every edition and version of a film.[23] After cinema we can perhaps be reassured that cinephilia lives on.

The cinephile makes enormous efforts to track down every edition of a loved film; or travels hundreds of miles on a pilgrimage to the real-world site of a scene from a favourite film, or to experience a gallery installation featuring a reworking of the same film, an *hommage* by another cinephile.[24] These are just a few of the innumerable practices surrounding, involving or inspired by films and other screen media, practices that belong essentially to the social sphere of media reception, use and consumption. While they may very well be inspired and sustained by the psychodynamics of the screen–user encounter – a possibility we should certainly not lose sight of – these practices do possess a social existence and an empirical observability that sets them apart from the metapsychological or the phenomenological aspects of the screen encounter; and it is not always easy to do justice to both of these without collapsing them together, giving attention to one over the other, or simply failing to recognize that there is a distinction between them that calls for consideration.

Screen cultures – the cultural and social practices surrounding screens and moving image media – are many and varied, and it has never been part of *Screen*'s ambition to cover this area exhaustively, certainly in terms of empirical inquiry. Nonetheless, the journal has given, and continues to give, attention to certain aspects of the cultural

23 On 'little madnesses', see D.W. Winnicott, *Human Nature* (London: Free Association Books, 1988), p. 107.

24 See, for example, Douglas Cunningham, '"It's all there it's no dream": *Vertigo* and the redemptive pleasures of the cinephilic pilgrimage', *Screen*, vol. 49, no. 2 (2008), pp. 123–41; Christian Keathley, *Cinephilia and History, or the Wind in the Trees* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006).

25 For examples on 'Third World' cinema, see Catherine Grant and Annette Kuhn (eds), *Screening World Cinema: a* Screen *Reader* (London: Routledge, 2006).

and cultural-historical area of screen studies, particularly as these pertain to 'other' (specifically experimental, independent, oppositional and 'Third World') cinemas or relate to broader film historical and cultural-historical inquiry.[25] The essays in Part 4, 'Screen cultures', reflect aspects of this tendency as they touch on the issue of screen theorizing today. Acland shows how a consciousness of the contemporary uses of moving-image screens – especially their increased portability – opens up fresh ways of researching the historical forerunners of the portable screen. His study of mobile film screens in the 1940s and 1950s classroom also reminds us of the formative role of audiovisual technology in the birth of screen studies as a teachable discipline.

Acland's genealogical approach to this aspect of the history of screen cultures calls to mind Michel Foucault's 'history of the present'; and a revival, in the context of screen studies, of Foucault's distinctive approach to power, knowledge and historical inquiry is explicitly advocated here in Lee Grieveson's essay, 'On governmentality and screens'. In turn, Grieveson's Foucauldian approach is a useful reminder that screen theory can itself be regarded as a practice of knowledge/power. John T. Caldwell's account of the screen theorizing practised by film and television professionals in Hollywood – an account based, interestingly, on the findings of his own ethnographic inquiry among industry practitioners[26] – is a reminder that screen theorizing is itself a component of 'screen culture', that it is a cultural practice not confined solely to scholars, and that it does not belong only in the academy and the classroom.

26 John T. Caldwell, *Production Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

The fourth of *Screen*'s birthdays can be dated to 1989, when SEFT was closed down by the withdrawal of BFI funding and the journal moved its editorial base to the University of Glasgow. It has since then been coedited by a small group of academics, some of whom had previously been officers of SEFT or been editorially involved with *Screen*; and from volume 31 onwards it has been published, with a revamped design, under the Oxford University Press imprint (figure 4). Glasgow was among a handful of pre-1992 universities to have pioneered degree programmes in film and television studies in the 1970s; but by the turn of the 1990s, screen studies had gained a foothold in UK higher education and *Screen* could relax its militant stance and concentrate on promoting preeminent scholarship in the discipline. Today, *Screen* serves a constituency that would have been inconceivable fifty, or even thirty, years ago (in the UK, for example, some seventy-five higher education institutions currently offer degree programmes in film studies).

Screen is no longer virtually alone in the field, either, for many new screen studies journals have lately come into existence. And while *Screen* can legitimately lay claim to continuing preeminence, it is clear that its role in the discipline in general, and in screen theorizing in particular, has changed, and will in all likelihood continue to do so. *Screen* nonetheless maintains its commitment to the discipline and its

health; and in common with every leading scholarly journal maintains an agency in the disciplinary power/knowledge nexus. Or, to put it another way, *Screen* has a responsibility to be a gatekeeper – remembering always that gates are not fences, and that (*pace* Foucault) power is productive. If, as Ellis suggests, we need to attend to an ethics of screen spectatorship; and if, as Caldwell implies, we ought to think of screen theorizing as a disciplinary practice, it is perhaps appropriate to remain aware more generally of the political and ethical dimensions and responsibilities of *Screen*'s gatekeeping, and of the journal's role in a public sphere of intellectual production and pedagogical activity.

In fifty years, this journal has grown from a manual of practical advice for aspiring teachers of film and television into an established, and leading, scholarly periodical is screen studies. Throughout these years, *Screen* has always been more than just a journal, actively promoting the discipline and supporting its practitioners in a range of ways, from the efforts of the 1950s and 1960s to increase the availability of films for classroom screenings, to the SEFT Weekend Schools of the 1970s, to today's sponsorship of lectures, symposia, the *Screen* Award, and the annual *Screen* Studies Conference. The year 2006 is the latest of *Screen*'s birthdays, marking the online launch of the journal in tandem with continued publication of the print version. The digital age changes the way we read journals. An issue can no longer be guaranteed the materiality of 'hard copy', to be read from cover to cover, and this affects the kinds of interventions which journals can now make. While recognizing this as a general shift in the ways in which journals are received, quarter by quarter, we are nevertheless confident that this Anniversary issue is, indeed, a 'special' one, reflecting past agendas and projecting new ones – and that it merits a 'special reading'.[27]

27 The print version of this issue is available to order via http://screen.oxfordjournals.org/

Cinema, the impossible, and a psychoanalysis to come

ROB LAPSLEY

Briefly, during that glorious period in the 1970s when *Screen* established itself as the most exciting periodical in the arts and humanities, psychoanalysis was the journal's dominant discourse. This status stemmed from the recognition that art in general, and cinema in particular, is always an event in which the happening of the work reconstitutes both work and audience. Although initially, and notoriously, suggesting that texts constituted subjects and their concomitant perspectives, *Screen* swiftly began to develop a more dialectical model in which there was an exchange between text and spectator. Instead of texts determining positions, textual trajectories were conceived as a series of affordances. Whether, and how, these affordances were taken up depended on the spectator. But with this new stress on spectatorial activity, weight was still ascribed to the text. Crucially it was claimed that the text brings into existence something that would not otherwise exist and which exists only if the subject becomes other. Just as music can produce a dancer in an individual, so a film can produce a spectator in a cinemagoer. The results may not always, in certain respects, be entirely happy – think of the dancing at some wedding receptions – but in both cases there is a becoming other. To adopt a more recent but largely compatible vocabulary, the cinematic spectator, in this perspective, is conceived in terms of the plasticity which Catherine Malabou persuasively argues is the defining characteristic of modern subjectivity.[1] Put briefly, the spectator is at once receptive and form-giving.

1 Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic* (London: Routledge, 2005).

To explicate the relationship between the dynamic contraries of action/passion and spontaneity/receptivity, *Screen* could have turned to a number of sources, most obviously German idealism or phenomenology. Instead, under the influence of the then fashionable Althusserianism, Freudian and, more importantly, Lacanian psychoanalysis were enlisted to provide a vocabulary to explore the problems and tensions in this notion of active and passive syntheses. But although at first glance psychoanalysis seemed to offer greater resources for fine-grained analysis than any of its rivals, its recruitment was quickly called into question (those of a certain age will recall the resignations from the *Screen* editorial board[2]).

Given the focus on the relationship between subjectivity and textual operation, psychoanalysis as mobilized and developed in *Screen* was, from the first, metapsychological. Rather than attempting to descry and decipher the latent textual content beneath the manifest, *Screen* sought to analyze the modes of subjectivity instantiated in the event of the text and the meanings thereby rendered available. While indispensable for any detailed explication of the subjectivities, temporalities and alterities constituted in the event of art, attention to the content and structure of the text was always framed by the focus on this larger processual context.

Today the standing of psychoanalysis has altered dramatically. It appears to survive only thanks to the intelligence and insight of the work of Slavoj Žižek, Alenka Zupančič and a handful of others.[3] In the eyes of many, it is a discredited relic of a less enlightened time. Of the crimes on its charge sheet, four are particularly salient: its reductionism; its pernicious sexual politics; its philosophical naivete – more precisely what Derrida famously termed its 'phallogocentrism'; and, following Deleuze, its life-denying misunderstanding of the nature of desire. Let us consider the import of each of these criticisms in turn.

Firstly, the charge that psychoanalysis is reductive: texts are read as mere confirmations of psychoanalytic tenets. While some readings in this vein could, on occasion, be rehabilitated as a break with an existing, unduly confined and straitened imaginary, it is plain that psychoanalysis *in this form* sold art short. But there is nothing inherent in psychoanalysis that would make this inevitable; instead, such reductionism proceeds only by forgetting the discoveries of psychoanalysis. Contrary to the suggestion in Hitchcock's *Marnie* (1964), dreams are not an encoded message, the deciphering of which will liberate the patient. Rather, they are a form of thinking irreducible to any other form of thought. They accomplish what cannot otherwise be accomplished. Similarly art – for example cinema – achieves what cannot otherwise be achieved.

The second charge against psychoanalysis is that it is homophobic and heterosexist. Here psychoanalysis is guilty as charged: in places, it has been both phallocratic and homophobic. In many Lacanian seminars, for example, same-sex relationships were routinely labelled 'perverse'. Whatever the subtleties of Lacan's notion of perversion, it remains the case that theorists, preening themselves on, as they saw it, their capacity

2 See Edward Buscombe, Christine Gledhill, Alan Lovell and Christopher Wiliams, 'Why we have resigned from the board of *Screen*', *Screen*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1976), pp. 106–9.

3 Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989); Alenka Zupančič, *Odd One In: On Comedy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 2008).

4 Tim Dean, *Beyond Sexuality* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

5 Jacques Derrida, 'Le facteur de la vérité', in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

as existentialist heroes to look reality square in the face, perpetuated the vilest of prejudices. No excuses can or should be made for this. If psychoanalysis is not in the business of telling people what they want to hear, nor should it sustain and reinforce oppression and discrimination. But if the existence of such tendencies is sufficient to damn certain forms of psychoanalysis, it does not discredit the psychoanalytic enterprise itself. In the end, it is simply a further argument for the reinvention of psychoanalysis. And this can be done: think, for example, of the work of Tim Dean.[4]

Thirdly, Derrida's charge of 'phallogocentrism':[5] it is hard not to love Derrida – the mourning goes on. But it is equally hard not to view his treatment of Lacan and, in particular, his charge of phallogocentrism, as at best uncharitable and at worst unjust. His enormously influential claim that Lacanian readings always programmatically and tediously 'discover' the same supposedly preexistent (phallic) latent content and thereby deny the work of the text rests almost exclusively upon a reading of Lacan's seminar on 'The purloined letter'. Given the purport of Derrida's entire career, this is quite simply astonishing. How could Derrida of all people ignore the text's larger context? Of course, quoted out of context – that is, in isolation from the other eight hundred or so pages of Lacan's *Ecrits*, the twenty-six seminars and the other writings – there are indeed propositions in that seminar which are hostages to fortune. It has to be admitted that Lacan did flirt with the quasi-Hegelian belief that in 'full speech' the truth could be spoken. But long before his later insistence that the truth can only be half-spoken, his concept of the *point de capiton* made plain the absence of a final word. To claim that there are pregiven, phallogocentric truths in Lacan's teaching is to imagine that 'the subject presumed to know' actually knows – while the whole point is that he does not.

This is not to say there are no truths. Although not everything can be said, and the whole truth remains elusive, there are more local truths, most notably the truths of analysis which are born and die in the session. Of course, as with works of art – of which more later – meanings are translated elsewhere but never without the alteration attendant on iteration and, more crucially, a vital loss. The aim of analysis is not to discover some original truth, for no such truth exists. Rather it is to alter subjective dispositions and comportments such that we have access to other newly created truths. The end of analysis is not some magic, all-purpose formula providing the key to the analysand's existence. Rather it is another way of being – or better, becoming. The truths of art are of a similar order. Time-bound and dependent on whom the subject has become, they cannot be possessed. In the cocreation that is the filmic event, the spectator appropriates the text but is, in turn, expropriated by it. In the process, he comes to know what would otherwise remain undisclosed. Truths and meanings emerge which are contingent on whom he has become and which vanish with that subjective mode. Consequently, such truths and meanings are irreducible to a

propositional content. Of course, propositions are advanced by texts. Most obviously, texts can contain ideological representations and these can be translated into the extrafilmic world. But such propositions are not the sum of the text. There is a textual dynamic which exceeds such representations and which lends them much of their power. As with the dreamwork, this dynamic transforms the spectator, producing a sense which becomes available because of whom the spectator has become. So, while we can tell the truth about ideological representations – demeaning stereotypes, say – we cannot tell the truth about the truths of art any more than we can capture the truths of analysis.

The fourth challenge to psychoanalysis comes from Deleuze. With his coauthor, Félix Guattari, Deleuze inveighed against the Lacanian notion that desire is lack. 'Desire', he insists, is 'productive' and 'does not lack anything. . . . Lack is a counterfeit of desire.'[6] As such, he has no truck with notions of desire as the tragic search for an unachievable wholeness and unity. Instead of a craven wallowing in the supposed divisions and alienations of a latter-day unhappy consciousness, Deleuze urges us to address Spinoza's question: 'How can we come to experience a maximum of joyful passions?'[7] Crucially, for present purposes, this issues in a very different perspective on art. Put crudely, while psychoanalysis has tended to think of art as a shelter from the real, Deleuze considers it to be creation, experimentation and liberation. Where in psychoanalytic treatments of film the talk has predominantly been of the pathological and the reactive (desire has been depicted as the yearning for an impossible plenitude and drive as the derivation of *jouissance* from its repeated failure to reach its goal), Deleuze speaks of 'a joy that is immanent to desire as though desire were filled by itself and its contemplations', and locates this joy above all in art. But this 'joy' has tended to be missed by those forms of psychoanalytic film criticism which view cinema as containment and compensation: identifications with idealized figures, fantasies of living happily ever after, the evasion of truth, and so on. If, as Deleuze claims, ethics means 'not to be unworthy of what happens to us',[8] then it can be persuasively argued that psychoanalysis has all too frequently been unworthy of the event of art.

In sum, the criticisms of psychoanalysis demand of it only the reinvention that should be its stock-in-trade. In another context, the art theorist John Roberts has recently suggested that many of the philosophical and intellectual approaches inherited from the late twentieth century 'no longer quite fix what needs fixing, or unfix what is fixed'.[9] Exactly the same could be said of psychoanalysis in the new century. But if actually existing forms of psychoanalysis are, in the current jargon, no longer 'fit for purpose', that is not to say that a more adequate form cannot be created. So what forms might psychoanalytic criticism assume? Before addressing this question, I will say a few words about my example, *Walkabout* (1971), a film which I consider – and not just because it is one of my all-time favourites – to be the finest British film ever made.

6 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley et al. (London: Athlone Press, 1984), p. 26.

7 Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* (New York, NY: Zone Books, 1990), p. 246.

8 Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense* (London: Continuum, 2004), p. 149.

9 Gail Day, 'A real surprise': review of Matthew Beaumont et al. (eds), *As Radical as Reality Itself*, *Radical Philosophy*, no. 149 (2008), p. 59.

Directed by Nicolas Roeg and scripted by Edward Bond, *Walkabout* concerns an unnamed English girl (Jenny Agutter) and her younger brother (Luc Roeg) who become stranded in the Australian outback after the death of their father. At the beginning of the film, the father is presented in an Adelaide instantly recognizable as the urban milieu of dehumanization and alienation familiar from so much of mid-century modernist cinema – many of the shots recall Michelangelo Antonioni's *L'Eclisse/The Eclipse* (1962) and Jean-Luc Godard's *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle/Two or Three Things I Know About Her* (1966). As in those 1960s films, the isolatory and divisive urban malaise is as inescapable as it is devastating. A crucial tracking shot in *Walkabout*, which travels along a brick wall to finally give on to a rush-hour crowd, is echoed later in an initially identical shot, this time ending in a desert landscape. If there is errancy, it is without either Eden or Promised Land.

Although the precise aetiology is uncertain, it becomes clear that the father has suffered some sort of setback or loss, precipitating a breakdown. The result is a *passage à l'acte* – an exit from a world that has become become insupportable and unendurable: he takes his children into the outback to murder them as a prelude to his own suicide. His attempted murders fail – the daughter successfully takes cover and escapes with her brother, while the father sets his car alight and turns the gun on himself. Abandoned in an environment which is radically different from, but just as inhospitable as, that which broke their father, the chidren are disorientated and unable to cope. Without water and with the ineluctable sun beating down, they seem, despite the noble efforts of the girl, to be doomed. Rescue arrives in the form of an Aborigine (David Gulpilil) on walkabout. According to the film's opening title, 'In Australia, when an Aborigine man-child reaches sixteen, he is sent out into the land. For months he must live from it. Sleep on it. Eat of its fruit and flesh. Stay alive.' And so an Aborigine banished ritualistically from his society and two children severed from theirs now undergo a form of initiation together.

When a rudimentary form of communication is established between the Aborigine and the brother, water and food are discovered and spirits lift. They are able not only to survive but even to enjoy aspects of their new life: they play together, laugh with each other, create artworks. But this interlude is swiftly overtaken by tragedy. The Aborigine becomes attracted to the girl and, as Agutter has observed, there is no way in which her character could reciprocate. His courtship ritual and dance only alarm the girl and he is rebuffed.[10] Unable to cope with the rejection, the Aborigine takes his own life. Again bereft, the children renew their attempts to return home and stumble upon a disused mine. This is where Bond's fourteen-page screenplay leaves them: destitute and alone. But in the film there is a concluding section; according to Agutter an afterthought of Roeg's in the latter stages of filming. This reprises the film's opening. Once more we see a besuited office worker making his way home through the city's crowds, while his wife prepares the evening

10 Geoffrey MacNab, 'Going *Walkabout*: an interview with Jenny Agutter', *Sight and Sound*, vol. 9, no. 3 (1999), p. 58.

meal. But although the flat is the same, the wife is now the girl and the man her husband. When her husband arrives with what he supposes to be the welcome news of a promotion and a pay rise, she hardly listens. Instead she daydreams, conjuring up a scene in which she, her brother and the Aborigine, like an idealized nuclear family, relax after swimming. The film then concludes with a recitation of poem XL from A.E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*, which laments the impossibility of returning to 'the land of lost content'.

So what can psychoanalytic criticism bring to this? Clearly there can be no single answer. This is primarily because psychoanalysis, as such, does not exist. As psychoanalysis confronts ever-changing circumstances, different social arrangements and shifting familial configurations, it is always in the making. It is also because different contexts require different strategies. Just as, in the treatment, the analyst intervenes differently at different times, so must the critic: the single 'correct' form of psychoanalytic intervention does not exist. For example, in certain situations the concern will be to investigate the libidinal investments sustaining ideological operations, while in others – in the present context for instance – the concern will be to continue the work of the text by other means.

The only feature which all interventions share is their necessarily experimental nature. If the truths of art cannot be possessed and formulated in propositional form, if it is impossible to tell the truth about the truth of the work, there can be no question of achieving some supposed final truth about the work, only of changing the subject's metapsychological relationship to it. If the purpose of the cure is to get the subject moving again – by breaking with the rigidity of particular identifications or the inertial drag of certain fantasies – one of the objectives in writing on art is similarly to shift and transform the subject so that other truths become available. Consequently, depending on the point of departure, any number of interventions around *Walkabout* might be proposed. I have developed a couple of examples here as they enable experimentation with Deleuze.

In the first perspective, the film is conceived as a response to the real as impossible. For psychoanalysis, the key point here is that art does not exist in a realm apart. What happens in art is always already happening: to be human is to respond to the real. Whereas for at least some religious believers, *the* way to respond is preordained, for psychoanalysis *the* way does not exist. Rather each of us has to invent our own response at each and every moment. Art, in its innumerable forms, is simply one such invention.

In analyzing *Walkabout* as a response to the real, it becomes apparent that this film, like most, consists of not one but a series of narratives; that is, of a series of responses. It is the narrative not just of two 'walkabouts' – the girl's and the boy's – but of (at least) four: four attempts to make a home in an inhospitable alterity. More specifically, it is the story of four

bids to find a form of independence from an order which the subject experiences as heterogeneous to it, but on which it depends.

Firstly, there is the father's *passage à l'acte*. Unable to bear the pressures of urban life, he escapes to the outback where there is no life for him at all. Hence there is an equivalence between his move into a wholly alien environment and his suicide: both are attempted escapes from an order which is destroying him but on which he depends. Then there is his daughter's exile in the outback, during which she is subjected to pressures as merciless as those he experienced in urban society. She is rescued from one form of over-proximity, the hammer of the sun, only to be confronted by that of the other's discordant desire, the trauma of a sexuality at odds with her own. Just as the father fled the over-proximity of the urban order, she flees what she perceives as the Aborigine's over-proximity to the bestial – she is, for example, repelled and horrified by the flies infesting the kills slung from his waist. But whereas the father killed himself to escape the social order on which he depended, she kills her 'Ariadne', the boy on whom her survival has come to depend. In rejecting the person who saved her from the annihilating natural order, she becomes the murderous social order and killer rather than the suicide.

Next there is the Aborigine. Fatal over-proximity in his story arises when he comes too close to an alien culture, signified by the ridiculous school uniforms which could not be less suited to the environmental conditions. Unable to make the girl his own, unable to find a place for himself in her social world, he, like her father, commits suicide. Exposed by the newly forged social bond to an other against whom he is defenceless, he is destroyed. When he tries to overcome the distance between them, he finds she is at once Theseus to his Ariadne and the lethal labyrinth itself. Like the father, he ends as a corpse in a tree; but his is a very different Calvary. He and the father move in opposing directions: the boy seeks a homecoming in the selfsame world that the father finds unendurable. Finally, there is the girl's second attempt to make a home for herself, this time in the wastes of an Adelaide high-rise. Although apparently back where she belongs, she has not, of course, 'returned', for there was no home to return to: she was always already on walkabout. If, for the boy, she was mirage, tree and sense, for herself she is walls, desert and the absence of sense. Recoiling, she takes refuge in a fantasized natural/social order free of conflicts and tensions; and, in seeking this impossible communion, this abolition of distances in a 'land of lost content', she once again annihilates the other in her relationship.

Such a reading does not attempt to discern the 'ultimate' meaning of the text, for the absence of any such meaning is precisely the condition of the text's existence and the *raison d'être* of its multiple narratives. If such a meaning were available, the text would proceed straight to it. Instead, as such meanings obtain only in fantasy and the imaginary, and as *Walkabout* eschews the consolations of both, it must make repeated attempts upon its impossible objective. And this is where the paradox arises. Although no single narrative in itself succeeds in articulating such

a meaning, something can arrive in the spaces between the various narrative strands; something which is neither expected nor anticipated. This is what occurs in *Walkabout*. Like many interesting narratives, *Walkabout* turns on a paradoxical reversal.[11] In this case, during her ordeal the girl longs desperately to leave the outback but, once restored to the city, wishes to return there. The effect of this reversal is to create a hitherto unglimpsed space in which the spectator's previous subjective mode in all its intent and ambition is undone, and the new arrives. Put at its simplest, the work of spectatorial projection and appropriation, engendered in conjunction with earlier sections of the text, fails; and in that failure the spectator is expropriated in an event exceeding the confines of his earlier subjective disposition. And that is exhilarating, for in such conclusions 'to make an end is to make a beginning'.[12]

Just as the meaning of a piece of music resides not in the original material – such as the motto theme of a symphony – but in the spaces and relationships created by a reworking of that material, so the 'meaning' of *Walkabout* is not reducible to a particular narrative strand, and even less to a theme such as 'otherness is at once the possibility and the impossibility of the subject', or to a formula along the lines of 'the task of the subject is to find the appropriate distance from the other'. Put at its simplest, if the purport of *Walkabout* could be thematized, it would not need narrativization to emerge. As with dreams, it is all in the work (of narrativization). If the human subject is an interstitial creature, for example, always between signifiers, then in films like *Walkabout* the spectator, in the gaps between narratives, can find new spaces in which to travel.

A second, albeit not unrelated, psychoanalytic approach would analyze the pathology of the textual structure as actualized in the event of the film. This approach, pioneered by Laura Mulvey and continued by Žižek, alerts readers to possible modes of *jouissance* afforded by the text. Much of what has been said above comes down to the claim that 'the meaning' of a text is more a matter of *jouissance* than of signification. As *jouissance* resists verbal expression and assumes different modes in each individual, it is doubly impossible to analyze fully. That said, there is scope for intervention: we are not stuck with our existing modes of *jouissance*; change is possible. This is, after all, the fundamental premiss of psychoanalysis. An analytic intervention can alter our approach to, and hence our experience of, the text.

I shall begin with the *jouissance* of the girl, with whom spectators are invited to identify for much of the film. After her trauma, and in response to a void in her existence, she takes refuge in fantasy. Her 'memory' of the Edenic episode in which she, her brother and the Aborigine swam together is a retroactive construction. As the narrative makes clear, her pastoral vision is an invention: she swam alone while her brother and their rescuer hunted. And, contrary to the romance suggested by the music on the soundtrack, her relationship with the Aborigine was characterized more by revulsion and apprehension than by sexual

11 For a useful discussion of paradox and narrative, see Jacques-Alain Miller, 'Profane illuminations' *Lacanian Ink*, no. 28 (2006), pp. 8–25.

12 T.S. Eliot, *The Four Quartets* (London: Faber and Faber, 1955), p. 42.

attraction. The 'land of lost content' is a mirage, an imaginary solution to the impasses of the real.

The spectator can take a similar option, imagining that in an undepicted scene the three were happy together. Alternatively she/he could opt for the *jouissance* afforded by tragedy in its fantasmatic dimension. By identifying with the girl and at the same time bearing witness to her plight, the spectator can fantasize that a God-like other exists, gazing upon the suffering with a redemptive compassion. But just as the spectator need not follow the girl's decision as it relates to her *jouissance*, so she/he need not take this equally deluded route. If she/he decides to believe in the existence of the object a, in an elsewhere, in a world where harmony and completion are possible, and if others believe the Other exists, the spectator can decide instead to believe in this world. Developing a Nietzschean perspective on Carl Dreyer and Roberto Rossellini, Deleuze writes that 'Restoring our belief in the world – this is the power of cinema'. And this is a power *Walkabout* shares. Unlike the girl, it does not shy away from 'this world as it is' in pursuit of 'another world, or . . . a transformed world'.[13] Rather, it seeks to 'reconnect man to what he sees and hears'.[14]

Before concluding, I would emphasize that I have no intention of conflating the thinking of Deleuze with the psychoanalytic orientation. For example, the Deleuze who wrote 'The real is not impossible; on the contrary, within the real everything is possible, everything becomes possible'[15] clearly stands at a distance from any notion of art as response to the real as impossible. Deleuze insists that the joy 'immanent to desire . . . implies no lack or impossibility'.[16] So my concern is only to proceed in the spirit of the Deleuze who often described a concept or an artwork as 'a gust of air', by introducing into the psychoanalytic tradition Deleuze's positive appraisal of art as just such a gust. The result, I suspect, is to take this essay in a direction inimical to prevailing readings of both Deleuze and psychoanalysis. I said it would be experimental.

Like many art films, *Walkabout* moves towards the disclosure of the essence of the human condition or a historical situation. Of course no such essence exists, but just as in the absence of identities we nevertheless have to identify, so in the absence of essences we still have to essentialize: we do so every time we pronounce that something is 'x', as, for instance, in the declaration that *Walkabout* is an art film. In other words, the issue is not essentialization in itself, if such a thing exists, but the specific terms of particular essentializations in different contexts. In the case of art cinema, the claim that 'this is the truth of the human condition' is persuasive and convincing because of whom the spectator has become. So if at the end of *Walkabout* we are convinced that the human situation is essentially tragic – that our condition is one of ineluctable exile – this is because of our journey through the text. A pathology of the art film immediately becomes apparent. When at the end of an art film the spectator exultantly – if silently – exclaims 'That's it', there is an all too obvious echo of the jubilant 'That's me' of the mirror

13 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: the Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Athlone Press, 1989), p. 172.

14 Ibid., p. 223.

15 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 27.

16 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 155.

phase. It could then be argued that the satisfactions of the art film are analogous to the fictive misrecognitions and narcissistic pleasures of the mirror phase. In both cases the spectator misses the exclusions which permit the sense of totalization and revels in an illusory self-appropriation.

But such accounts miss two crucial dimensions of the experience. Firstly, there are the satisfactions of giving and receiving a form. And secondly, there is what the form renders possible. The institution of subjectivity in the mirror phase involves exclusions and repressions, but it also renders possible. With the sense of self engendered by identification, the subject is able to engage in new, often happier, relationships with others. If the mirror stage encloses the subject in misrecognition, this also opens the subject to a future in which, through interaction with others, it may be transformed. Similarly the institution of art, or more precisely the sense of completion at the conclusion of certain artworks, rests on a fictive sense of unity – complete unification is as impossible in art as it is in subjectivity. But such moments can transcend the confines of misrecognition: there is liberation as well as capture. To switch vocabularies: art is not just deterritorialization, not just lines of flight – vital though these are. There is also, as Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the *ritornello* makes plain, a contrary movement.

In the free indirect discourse of *Walkabout*'s final sequence, the spectator is not simply the girl with her fantasy or the nostalgic Housman, but is between them and the further components of the image: the foregrounded school uniforms hung, in all their incongruity and anachronism, on the poles like the husks of former selves; and, above all, the music. The music was also present at the girl's previous swim, and its appearance there was more significant. Then, it provided a counterpoint to the children's fear and despair at their abandonment in the alien outback. Instead of 'underscoring' their predicament, it spoke of all they were missing as a consequence of their anxieties; it intimated that there was a world of sense obscured by the opacity of the apparently unyielding and unforgiving earth. When the music recurs at the end, it is not simply to express the girl's wistful yearning but to announce something other than impossible longing and to recall the spectator to other forms of desire. On the occasion of Derrida's death, Catherine Malabou suggested that 'the ultimate teaching' of Jacques Derrida is that 'there is another possibility'.[17] And that surely can be art's lesson. As Housman put it, the task of the poet is to take an impossibility and 'cast an air of possibility over it'.[18]

Feeling trapped, the patient enters analysis in the hope of liberation. In the ensuing treatment the analyst does not produce a final interpretation – this does not exist – but seeks by his intervention to free the analysand from his imprisoning self-image and concomitant mode of *jouissance*. Similarly, the critic does not produce a definitive reading – again this does not exist – but seeks by her/his intervention to prevent the spectator from becoming blocked. If this is what this essay attempts, it should go

17 Catherine Malabou, 'Another possibility', *Research in Phenomenology*, vol. 36, no. 1 (2006), p. 115.

18 Quoted in the BBC Radio 4 podcast *Great Lives: A.E. Housman*, tx 27 May 2008.

19   Jacques Derrida, 'Passions', in
     David Wood (ed.), *Derrida: a
     Critical Reader* (Oxford:
     Blackwell, 1992) p. 15.

20   Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth
     Roudinesco, *For What Tomorrow:
     a Dialogue*, trans. Jeff Fort
     (Stanford, CA: Stanford
     University Press, 2004), p. 168.

without saying that it makes no claims to being a model. Rather it is an example in a field where, as Derrida would say, there are 'no examples' and 'only examples'.[19] If Derrida was wrong in his reading of Lacan's teaching, he was absolutely right to suggest that psychoanalysis, like democracy, is always 'to come'.[20] By this he did not mean that any 'actually existing psychoanalysis' falls short of a quasi-Kantian regulative ideal of psychoanalysis, but rather that any specification of psychoanalysis risks negating and foreclosing the future. Put crudely, any definition would incarcerate the unique and singular patients of the future in the categories, concepts and practices of a historical moment that can never be theirs. Consequently, as we cannot but seek to define and determine, we face an impossible task. And that, of course, for both Derrida and Lacan, is what constitutes our chance: the chance for invention. The task of the critic with the artwork, like that of the analyst with the analysand, is to ensure that this chance is not passed up.

The audience of one: adult chat television and the architecture of participation

STEPHANIE MARRIOTT

Jade is on the bed. She is lying on her stomach facing the camera in long shot, propped up on her elbows and holding a phone to her left ear. She is wearing a black mesh midriff top over a silver spandex boob tube with matching boybriefs. High-key lighting relentlessly reveals what is there to be seen. Jade's head is tilted down and her eyes are lowered. She is speaking into the phone. She bites her lip, flicks her gaze towards the camera and away again. Her mouth is compressed and she appears to be talking vehemently, baring her teeth briefly and frowning. She is gently flexing her behind, lifting it on and off the bed. There is a rapid dissolve to a high-angle medium closeup, and Jade immediately turns her head and gazes briefly up at the camera before lowering her eyes again. She continues to snarl into the phone, intermittently glancing towards the camera as it pulls back to frame her in medium shot. Now she turns onto her side, facing the camera. She looks down, adjusting the boob tube before glancing to camera again, biting her lip and running her hand over her left breast. She rolls back onto her stomach, smiles, dangles her legs in the air and continues to talk into the phone.

Jade is but one possible focus of attention in the 'dense image field' that is the television screen at this moment, with its multiple and dispersed sites of address to the audience.[1] A graphic overlay provides telephone numbers and exhorts the viewer to make use of them ('Call from your mobile'; 'Call the girls now'; 'Call us using ur [sic] credit

1 Karen Orr Vered, 'Televisual aesthetics in Y2K: from windows on the world to a windows interface', *Convergence*, vol. 8, no. 3 (2002), pp. 49–50.

card'; 'Get your message to screen'). The graphics also serve to display an incoming SMS ('ana show me that hot body!! Can't wait to call ya!! Marco x'). In a small inset window in the bottom righthand corner of the screen, Anna and Yvette are on the microphones, responding to this message. They play with the notion that Anna's performance – standing up and smoothing her hands down her body, turning her back and booty-shaking in a buttock-high skirt as the camera roams up and down her body – is only for the texter (Thank you, Marco, for your message, and of course I would be happy to show you my hhhhhhot body. Only for you. Everybody close eyes. Marco open eyes'; 'Only for Marco. No peeking there, boys, through your fingers').

Fast forward past the 10 pm watershed and the roles are reversed. Anna and Yvette are on the bed and on the phones, topless, lying on their stomachs facing the camera. The graphics exhort the viewer to text the show and 'get the babes to do what you want!'. In the inset window Jade is responding to texts. 'The first one is coming through right now. Is it gonna be *your* one? Is it actually gonna be *your* text message that *you* sent me live on TV right now? Let's see.' In fact it is from Baz 267, asking her to 'rub her boobs and moan Barry'. Jade obliges. We are now an hour or so into the nightly eight-and-a-half-hour broadcast of the 'adult chat' channel *Babestation*.

The 'adult chat' or interactive softcore porn channels on British satellite television – *Babestation, Babeworld, Tease Me, House of Fun* and others – pose a series of challenges to conventional notions of the relationship between television and its viewers. Firstly, television is characteristically held to address itself to an overhearing audience, which is established as the principal beneficiary of the performance through institutional features which make it clear that the talk is intended for individuals other than those directly participating onscreen.[2] By contrast, significant elements of pay-to-participate soft porn television are inaudible, taking the form of a series of private acts in a public space which cannot be overheard – or, by and large, comprehended – by viewers unless they call to listen in. Secondly, the communicative regime of broadcasting is typically understood to centre on the production of creative content, for which revenue must be sought via a number of mechanisms such as the 'family poll tax' of an annual licence fee,[3] or through commercial avenues such as audience subscription, advertising or sponsorship. As this essay will demonstrate, however, the modes of address of adult chat television reveal a strict inversion of the naturalized order, with programme content entirely generated and used up in the pursuit of revenue. Thirdly, pay-to-participate television promises its viewers a fully bilateral engagement with a television performer. However, while television's characteristics as a medium – its near-instantaneous processes of transmission and reception; its historical specificity as an always-available, one-to-many medium – are essential for attracting the audience which is required for revenue generation, interactive engagement is secured in this case through telephony as a

2 John Heritage and David Greatbatch, 'On the institutional character of institutional talk: the case of news interviews', in Deirdre Boden and Don Zimmerman (eds), *Talk and Social Structure* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1991), pp. 93–137.

3 Jeremy Mitchell, 'Convergent communications, fragmented regulation and consumer needs', in William H. Melody (ed.), *Telecom Reform: Principles, Policies and Regulatory Practices* (Lyngby: Den Private Ingeniørfond, Technical University of Denmark, 1997), p. 435.

cross-media return path: television is thus reduced to little more than a platform whose technological, historical and institutional features render it appropriate as a performance space in which the communicative machinery necessary to elicit interactivity can be staged.

It is no accident that this particular format should have arisen at this juncture. Pay-to-participate television sits at the nexus of a complex set of interrelated circumstances. The convergence of broadcasting, telecommunications and the internet in the late twentieth century offered a lifeline to commercial broadcasters in the UK, who were increasingly hard-pressed by the fallout from audience fragmentation, niche marketing and content-sharing in a changing media ecology dominated by the development of digital technologies and deregulation. As the two traditional products of commercial television – programmes and audiences – began to underperform as sources of revenue, so the possibilities arose for dispersing content across 'multi-platform media events' through 'enhanced television formats' which involved elements such as discussion boards, downloads, competition lines and programme alerts.[4]

The expansion of creative content across multiple platforms serves a dual function, adding value to existing programming and providing a new source of revenue through the premium-rate services used by viewers to download content and participate in voting and competitions. This latter function, however, has swiftly taken on a life of its own. The phone-in was an existing and established format which permitted individual members of the audience to engage live on-air with experts and agony aunts. With the development of premium-rate services in the 1980s and their introduction into television programmes a couple of decades later, television could begin to play with the possibilities for deriving income through telecommunication services. One such application – the use of premium-rate telephony as a platform for mass viewer phone-ins to competition and voting lines – rapidly became subject to abuse, culminating in a series of interventions by the regulator in the early years of the twenty-first century with the consequence that the major terrestrial players sold or withdrew their dedicated channels (Channel 4's *Quiz TV* in 2006, and *ITV Play* in 2007),[5] and a number of premium-rate phone-in segments within existing programme formats were scrapped.

A further application has continued to flourish, however. Initially aired as programme segments on live satellite channels, within a couple of years participation formats such as psychic, dating and adult chat services had developed into fully-fledged stand-alone channels in the 800s and 900s of the Sky satellite electronic programme guide. Just as encryption technologies had permitted broadcasters to develop new income streams through viewer subscription, so participation television would be able to derive its whole income directly from its audience via a pay-to-participate model, using premium-rate phone lines as a return path.

4 Gillian Doyle, *Understanding Media Economics* (London: Sage, 2002), p. 60; Jane Roscoe, 'Multi-platform event television: reconceptualizing our relationship with television', *The Communication Review*, vol. 7, no. 4 (2004), p. 364; Virginia Nightingale and Tim Dwyer, 'The audience politics of "enhanced" television formats', *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2006), p. 30.

5 Mediatique, *Participation TV: Market Overview* (London: Ofcom, 2007), p. 20.

6   Ibid., pp. 6, 29.

7   Mark Ward, 'Will porn kick-start the video phone revolution?', http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/2992914.stm [accessed 18 March 2008].

8   Stephen Maddison, 'From porno-topia to total information awareness, or, what forces really govern access to porn?', *New Formations*, no. 52 (2004), p. 36.

9   Gerard Goggin and Christina Spurgeon, 'Premium rate culture: the new business of mobile interactivity', *New Media and Society*, vol. 9, no. 5 (2007), p. 755.

10 Ian Hutchby, *Conversation and Technology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p. 26.

11 As Mediatique points out, adult chat is 'aimed almost entirely' at late-night young male viewers. This makes the audience profile of *Babestation* quite unlike channels such as *Psychic Interactive*, whose demographic consists principally of daytime female viewers (*Participation TV*, p. 29), and situates the format alongside other male-oriented channels such as *Men and Motors* and *Dave* as a distinct break from the conventional notion of television's primarily domestic discourse to a 'feminized' audience.

12 Jens F Jensen. 'Interactive television: new genres, new format, new content', ACM International Conference Proceedings Series, no. 123 (2005), p. 90.

13 Ibid., p. 95.

14 Yngvil Beyer, Sara Enli Gunn, Arnt Maasø and Espen Ytreberg, 'Small talk makes a big difference: recent developments in interactive, SMS-based television', *Television and New Media*, vol. 8, no. 3 (2007), p. 215.

15 Kenneth J. Gergen, 'The challenge of absent presence', in James E Katz and Mark A. Aakhus (eds), *Perpetual Contact: Mobile Communication, Private Talk, Public Performance* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 227.

The soft porn channels were estimated to account for only around £15 million of an estimated £118 million of participation television revenue in the UK in 2007,[6] but they have nevertheless been at the forefront of developing new frameworks of participation for enticing viewers into the interactivity which is the sole source of their revenue. This should come as little surprise. Adult entertainment has played a key role in convergence. Sex both drives technological development (leading one writer to refer to pornography as the 'handmaiden of new technology'[7]) and is driven by it in turn, with the development of digital technologies serving as 'key engines in the pornographication of culture'.[8] It is, furthermore, a huge money-spinner for premium-rate services, with a predicted market of US$1.2 billion globally in 2008.[9] This figure dwarfs the expected revenue of the UK interactive soft porn channels, but nevertheless helps to account for their proliferation on the Sky EPG, where, at the time of writing, there are around ten dedicated user-pays softcore porn channels operating on a typical Saturday night.

It is the development of premium-rate phone lines which has proved the key factor in the growth of these channels. If this essay has so far provided a somewhat mechanistic account of the generation of revenues via call charges which permits pay-to-participate television to function as a profitable enterprise, then this can be swiftly redressed via a consideration of the 'affordances', or action possibilities,[10] of telephony as a medium which render it particularly suited to this task. For young male viewers, first of all – the principal demographic for such channels[11] – SMS messaging is a habitualized mode of communication which is now 'almost as intuitive as the use of the remote'.[12] For channels largely dependent on 'lazy interactivity' – impulsive media use based around 'quick decisions, short attention spans, handheld remotes, and instant gratification'[13] – the affordances of mobile telephony as a mode of everyday communication and consumption thus fit tightly with the communicative imperatives of the format. As a number of writers have commented, furthermore, mobile phones characteristically afford the user a highly personalized encounter, delivering 'a one-to-one relation between user and provider'[14] which transcends distance and permits the user to become 'absorbed by a technologically mediated world of elsewhere'.[15] These characteristics – familiarity, intimacy, the illusion of presence-in-absence at a distant location – are critical for a format based around the elicitation of sex talk.

Telephony, finally, holds out the promise of interactivity. As a medium predicated on the perpetual promise of real-time encounters with distant others, television would appear at first glance to be well placed to stage interactive exchanges with its viewers. A number of factors, however, have militated against this historically. From a technological standpoint, the mechanisms of broadcasting which delivered vision-at-a-distance made it impossible to provide a medium-specific return path suited to large-scale viewer participation, leading to a predominantly one-way flow of information to the audience. Television's institutional control

over its forms of talk, furthermore, typically entails an unequal distribution of communicative entitlements. Taken together, these two factors – the technical limitations of the broadcast apparatus, and the institutional management of interpersonal encounters – worked against the delivery of significant participant intervention in the communicative flow, a key criterion for interactivity.[16]

Over time, television has developed a number of mechanisms which either mask or mitigate this asymmetrical communicative situation. Some of these (such as direct address to camera) work to simulate the gaze, bodily orientation and conversational style of an interpersonal exchange, laying the groundwork for the viewer to enter into a parasocial relationship with the performer. Some function to instantiate an active audience element by embedding it within programme formats: the studio audience in talk shows; the baying/acclamatory crowd outside the *Big Brother* house; the 'members of the public' along the processional routes of ceremonial media events. Others provide for a degree of viewer penetration into the processes of textual production via elements such as phone-ins. The latter, however, like parallel feedback systems in other media (participation in magazine and newspaper writing; letters to the editor; talkback radio)[17] afford only 'limited participation in the communication process',[18] with the institution retaining a high degree of control over the interaction. Similarly, early attempts to mitigate the competitive challenge posed by the rise of participatory culture (through the provision of medium-internal digital television pathways such as two-way cable systems) have generally been deemed unsuccessful due to their inability to deliver much more than 'lip service interactivity' via onscreen menus and the use of the remote control,[19] one journalist going so far as to castigate an early species of interactive television in the USA as 'the most expensive pizza delivery system ever invented'.[20]

The degree to which telecommunications technology, by contrast, offers a fully interactive experience to viewers should not be overestimated: interactivity is not simply a matter of the affordances of a particular medium but also reflects the extent to which institutional factors permit the user to 'exert an influence on the content and/or form of the mediated communication'.[21] Pay-to-participate channels routinely moderate SMS and multimedia messages before these appear on the graphic interface, and either screen callers in advance or – as in the case of *Babestation* – mute the interaction so that callers can be seen but not heard. Nevertheless, viewers who phone one of the adult chat channels are offered a two-way real-time encounter with a performer, in the course of which they are at liberty to control not only the conversation but also – within the constraints imposed by the regulators – the behaviour of the onscreen 'babe'. If television as a medium has historically operated on a 'don't talk back' basis,[22] then the harnessing of telecommunications technology would appear to give the viewer, in principle at least, the opportunity to do just that.

16 Stig Hjarvard, 'Simulated conversations: the simulation of interpersonal communication in electronic media', in Anne Jerslev (ed.), *Realism and 'Reality' in Film and Media* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2002), p. 238.

17 Bridget Griffen-Foley, 'From *Tit-Bits* to *Big Brother*: a century of audience participation in the media', *Media, Culture and Society*, vol. 26, no. 4 (2004), pp. 533–48.

18 Sally J. McMillan, 'A four-part model of cyber-interactivity: some cyber-places are more interactive than others', *New Media and Society*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2002), p. 277.

19 Rob Cover, 'Audience inter/active: interactive media, narrative control and reconceiving audience history', *New Media and Society*, vol. 8, no. 3 (2006), p. 151.

20 Pyungho Kim, 'Deconstructing interactive TV networks', *Javnost – The Public*, no. 3 (1999), p. 91.

21 Jens F. Jensen, 'Interactivity: tracing a new concept in media and communication studies', *Nordicom Review*, no. 19, no. 1 (1998), p. 201.

22 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), p.170.

Basbestation's dependence on mobile interactivity to generate revenue poses an interesting problem, however. As the channel operator Cellcast (which produces and broadcasts *Babestation* and other user-pays channels such as *Psychic Interactive*) puts it, interactive programming entails 'a new revenue model from the elusive "audience of one"',[23] on whom the channel is dependent for revenue. *Babestation* is thus dominated by a single imperative: it must convert this 'audience of one' into a user who will actively engage in premium-rate encounters with the channel. It must, in other words, successfully interpellate the viewer as a user.

But whilst it is relatively easy to account for the motivations informing callers' decisions to engage with quiz or psychic interactive channels – the one offering the possibility of winning, and the other offering a personalized reading – the elicitation of interactivity would appear to pose more of a problem for adult chat television, which must make available a certain amount of free content to arrest the attention of casually surfing viewers who happen to alight on the channel. One presenter succinctly articulates this problem in an address to camera: 'I know you can see what she looks like and a lot of you blokes, well what's the point in ringing her, I can see you anyway'. The presenter's rejoinder supplies part of the answer here:

> Because it's what you can't hear that's more important, boys, you can't hear why she's jumping up and down on that bed, you can't hear why she's rubbing her breasts. The guy who's bothered to ring her he's getting it all, he's getting fully satisfied, every word coming out her mouth . . . so why don't you try it out?

This kind of direct huckstering to camera is a significant element in the channel's strategy for enticing members of the audience into interactivity, hailing them as active agents with a significant role to play in the generation of the text ('Throughout the course of this evening, the next eight-and-a-half hours, our show is gonna rely on *you*. We are gonna be needing your calls, your texts, your photos, cos we're gonna wanna hear your voice and read your messages all night long'), and spelling out the benefits of an interpersonal encounter both for the caller ('She looks a little bit innocent, but wait till you hear what comes out of that dirty mouth . . . in less than forty-five seconds you could be on the other end of that dirty filthy little phone . . . in less than forty-five seconds you could be experiencing the best orgasm of your life') and for the 'babe' ('She's gagging for you right now, guys'). But *Babestation* also displays a number of further complex and interrelated strategies to lure the viewer. Whilst the muting of the two-way conversations on the bed, for example, clearly operates to protect the channel from the potential perils of broadcasting talk live on-air which might be deemed inappropriate by the regulator, it also serves a number of key functions in eliciting interactivity. The muting offers a strong inducement for the free rider to transform himself into a user who can hear what is being said, and

functions, moreover, to garner additional revenue by permitting viewers to phone in and position themselves as overhearers ('If you're feeling shy tonight then the hash key is your new best friend . . . you will never be asked to say a single word'). In addition, the inaudible conversations on the bed work to construct the caller as both *invisibly present* (demonstrably engaged in a remote on-the-bed interaction, as in Jade's interaction with the caller described at the beginning of this essay, where her vehement demeanour is strongly suggestive of a dominatrix encounter) and *visibly absent* (offering a palpably empty subject position into which viewers can project themselves and which they can subsequently choose to fill by phoning in).

The performers' gaze has a key role to play here in the construction and elaboration of this 'architecture of participation'[24] through which the 'audience of one' is serially and iteratively drawn into interactivity. Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen distinguish between images in which participants 'look directly at the viewer's eyes' and those in which they do not, arguing that the first represents a 'demand' that the viewer engage with the participant whilst the second serves as an 'offer' to be looked at.[25] *Babestation* positions the viewer as the recipient of a direct gaze from both the presenter reading out text messages and the 'babes' on the bed when they are between calls (at which point the gaze is accompanied by other behaviours such as waggling the phone enticingly at the camera). Once the 'babes' are engaged in a call, however, they characteristically tilt their heads down as if to shield a highly intimate and personal conversation from the attention of onlookers, and the 'demand' to engage is replaced by an intermittent gaze towards and away from the camera. As the performer looks away, both the objectifying movements of the camera as it roams up and down her body and her averted gaze function to position her as there to be looked at. The glances towards the camera, by contrast, are clearly directed not at the viewer but at the caller, as the 'babe' performs her role as a meat puppet obedient to and acting out his requests. Thus these intermittent looks to camera, like the muting of the conversation, work to exclude the viewer from the encounter whilst simultaneously inviting him to take up the object/ subject position demonstratively identified by the gaze.

Just as Martin Montgomery has commented on the way in which one genre of radio – DJ talk – continually redirects utterances to different constituencies of the audience, casting and recasting the audience 'into different positions' and addressing the 'interpellated subject' in 'discursively discriminated ways',[26] so *Babestation*'s dense image field permits the channel to hail the audience into a number of different subjectivities simultaneously, each of which offers a different actual or potential position of active engagement. As the opening extract reveals, for instance, while Jade's seen-but-not-heard conversation on the bed works to establish a you-could-be-next position for a potential caller to fill, Anna and Yvette's play at the same moment with the notion that a seductive twirl is 'only' for an individual texter constructs a just-for-you

24 Tim O'Reilly, 'The architecture of participation', http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/a/oreilly/tim/news/2005/09/30/what-is-web-20.html?page = 3 [accessed 27 May 2008].

25 Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: the Grammar of Visual Design* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 122.

26 Martin Montgomery, 'DJ talk', *Media, Culture and Society,* vol. 8, no. 4 (1986) pp. 421–40.

position which validates and encourages the activity of messaging through the promise of an exclusive address. Meanwhile, the graphic interface relentlessly elicits interactivity with its stream of injunctions to an unspecified but individually-hailed viewer ('Call from your mobile'; 'Call the girls now'; 'Call us using ur credit card'; 'Get your message to screen'). Similarly, Jade's address to the viewer some minutes later ('Is it gonna be *your* one? Is it actually gonna be *your* text message that *you* sent me live on TV right now?') functions to construct a position for the viewer as user by presupposing their already-active engagement, even as Anna and Yvette, working the beds, engage with current callers and construct a space of exclusion into which further viewers can in turn be drawn.

Babestation, furthermore, encourages a sequential adoption of roles, as this further example reveals, where a texter is both rewarded for his existing activity and coaxed into more ('You're sexy, babe, I love it, can you give us a big sexy kiss, love you lots, Neil. Of course, Neil, I can definitely do that for you. What's sexy about me, though, Neil, what's your favourite part, hmmm? Well maybe you can wait to tell me that when I'm on the phones, cos of course, guys, I am on the phones next'). Individual moments of address to camera frequently shift from one mode to another, thus hailing the viewer both simultaneously and serially as a presupposed-to-be-active user, an actual instantiated user, a potential user and a member of an imagined community who are engaged or poised to become engaged with the channel:

> So remember guys, if you wanna write *your* text message on that screen same as Barry it is absolutely simple, get out your mobile phone right now, go to your messages, create message text TV . . . and then write whatever you want, guys. Try and keep it as clean as possible cos otherwise it can't go out live on air but we will read all messages, the indecent ones behind scenes when we're on a break . . . you can actually see your message live on TV.

The viewer here is hailed in turn as a member of the community engaged with the programme ('remember guys'), as an individual to be enticed into interactivity ('get out your mobile phone right now') as part of a plurality again ('write whatever you want, guys') and as a potential sole recipient of a reward ('you can actually see your message live on TV'). At other moments, audience members may find themselves interpellated as part of an imagined communal viewing experience for whom porn consumption is clearly positioned as a 'recreational' activity or 'lifestyle choice'.[27]

> Now I know there's a sporting event on tonight, some of you probably having a bit of a get-together round your house, a lot of testosterone's probably in that room, you're probably having a little bit of a laugh and a joke. Well you're watching *Babestation*, we are secretly getting you a little bit excited. Why not just leap off to the toilet with your mobile

27 Elizabeth Bernstein, 'The meaning of the purchase: desire, demand and the commerce of sex', *Ethnography*, vol. 2, no. 3 (2001), p. 397; Maddison, 'From porno-topia to total information awareness', p. 44.

phone in your hand . . . and have a bit of secret fun and then maybe you can go back to the lads and tell them how great it was.

I return, in closing, to my earlier assertion that pay-to-participate soft porn television upends received wisdom concerning the relationship between creative content and revenue. In a series of consultation documents and reports between 2006 and 2008, the communications industry regulator Ofcom set out the terms for investigating participation television in the UK. Ofcom's position, as laid out in its 2008 consultation document, was that programmes must 'not in effect be vehicles' for the promotion of premium-rate services.[28] In mounting this argument, Ofcom drew on a distinction in a 2007 report between 'promotional content' and 'editorial', where the former includes onscreen contact graphics and 'promotion via presenter' such as 'Call the number on your screen' or 'What would you do with £10,000 tax-free cash?', and the latter includes such phenomena as presenter comments, audible chats with callers, references to the personal lives of presenters and 'any references made by presenters that could not be taken as direct encouragement to participate in the show', such as 'Hi . . . where are you calling from?' or 'I've been there . . . I've been divorced and now I am a single parent but I turned my life around' (as uttered by a presenter to a caller in a performance of empathy).[29] The 2007 report concluded that only ten per cent of the material in adult chat television could be categorized as editorial content, but even this figure would seem to be an overestimate. As Louise Fritchie and Kim Johnson argue in a 2003 paper on home shopping channels, the establishment of an interpersonal relationship between host and viewer ('liking') is an essential ingredient in the formulation of 'persuasion strategies' which transform viewers into consumers who will purchase goods from the channel.[30] In a parallel piece on the home shopping channel QVC, Mary Bucholtz likewise comments that the forging of social links between presenters and viewers is central to the establishment of the 'mediated intimacy' which permits the audience to trust the host and therefore commit themselves to a purchase.[31]

Babestation similarly puts in place a number of strategies which work to construct a relationship of affinity with the viewer. The half-hourly-or-so rotation of the performers from their front-stage manifestation as presenters to a back-stage appearance on the beds, for instance, serves to set up the conditions for parasociality. In her front-stage persona the 'babe' functions both as quasi-celebrity and as sexual performer soon-to-be-engaged with a regular john, reading out texts from viewers eagerly looking forward to an upcoming one-on-one with her on the bed/on the phone and voicing a conspicuous enthusiasm in turn ('You have me, Chelsea, who's next on those telephone lines, and I simply cannot wait'). The apparently random backchat from presenters, furthermore, is in a highly sexualized vein ('I was in the park all day and I actually forgot I had work, and then when I got home and I realized I got all excited

28 Ofcom, *Participation TV Part 2: Keeping Advertising Separate from Editorial* (Ofcom, 2008), p. 1.

29 Communications Research Group, *An Independent Report on Participation TV – Quizzes, Adult Chat and Psychic Readings* (Ofcom, 2007), pp. 1–18.

30 Louise Lystig Fritchie and Kim K.P. Johnson, 'Personal selling approaches used in television shopping', *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, vol. 7, no. 3 (2003), pp. 249–58.

31 Mary Bucholtz, '"Thanks for stopping by": gender and virtual intimacy in American shop-by-television discourse', in Maggie Andrews and Mary M. Talbot (eds), *All the World and Her Husband: Women in Twentieth-Century Consumer Culture* (London: Cassell, 2000), p. 199.

32 As Rosalind Gill notes, such representations should not be taken as indicating that the women 'are pleasing themselves and are freely choosing'. Gill, 'From sexual objectification to sexual subjectification: the resexualisation of women's bodies in the media', *Feminist Media Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1 (2003), pp. 99–106. Rather, *Babestation* functions in this respect both to interpellate its young male demographic via the display of sexually aggressive 'ladette' behaviour and by positioning its audience as active subjects and objects of desire.

33 Since Ofcom's view in this respect is that unless the 'primary purpose' of such formats is editorial they must be 'taken off air' (Ofcom, *Participation TV Part 2*, p. 3), the future of adult chat on British television looks distinctly uncertain.

34 Robert C. Allen, 'Audience-oriented criticism and television', in *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 126.

because I'd been in the park looking at all these sexy guys running around with no shirts on, and getting really really horny'), which works both to perform the presenters as 'knowing, active and desiring sexual subjects'[32] and to cast the viewer as a purveyor of sexual pleasure whose participation in the programme is not only desirable but is a necessary intervention if the appetites of the performers are to be met ('she's gagging for you right now, guys').

Babestation, in other words, does not appear to generate any content which 'could not be taken as direct encouragement to participate in the show': its modes of address are entirely at the service of grooming the viewer into interactivity.[33] Whilst this may, at first glance, appear to be a less than radical shift – home shopping, after all, works similarly to hail viewers into commercial activity through modes of address which position them as consumers – the difference should be clear. Home shopping channels, as Robert Allen has commented, 'sell products to viewers, not viewers to advertisers'.[34] Adult chat television, however – whilst clearly still offering a 'product' to the viewer in its overt display and exploitation of the female body – directly *monetizes interactivity*, commodifying the interpersonal through sexual transactions for which the viewer pays at the point of use through call charges. In its deployment of television as little more than a platform for the display of these private interactive encounters and in its subordination of content production to revenue generation, interactive soft porn television thus transforms and unmakes television as it has characteristically been understood.

The arts of looking: D.W. Winnicott and Michael Haneke

VICKY LEBEAU

1 D.W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 111.

2 Christian Metz, 'The imaginary signifier', trans. Ben Brewster, *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 2 (1975), pp. 14–76, p. 48. While this is not the place to chart the history of that analogy, Winnicott's absence from it is striking, if not surprising. The post-Lacanian orthodoxy at work in the humanities continues to limit engagement with Winnicott's writings in the academy. Exceptions in film theory include Annette Kuhn, 'Thresholds: film as film and the aesthetic experience', *Screen*, vol. 46, no. 4 (2005), pp. 401–14; Ira Konigsberg, 'Transitional phenomena, transitional space: creativity and spectatorship in film', *Psychoanalytic Review*, vol. 83, no. 6 (1996), pp. 865–89; Eric Santner, *Stranded Objects* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990).

3 T.J. Clark, *The Absolute Bourgeois: Aesthetics and Politics in France 1848–1851* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), p. 30.

'Wouldn't it be awful', confides one of D.W. Winnicott's patients in the course of her psychoanalysis with him, 'if the child looked into the mirror and saw nothing!' It is a stark and unsettling vision: a child, a mirror, a reflection that, because it is not there, becomes awful. Introducing his patient's words as an illustration of one of the fundamental insights of his work, Winnicott turns her sense of awe back onto the mother. 'In individual emotional development', he writes at the very beginning of 'Mirror-role of mother and family in child development', first published in 1967, '*the precursor of the mirror is the mother's face*. I wish to refer to the normal aspect of this and also to its psychopathology.'[1]

The idea of the mirror has been central to the encounter between psychoanalysis and studies in visual culture. 'Thus film is like the mirror': in 1975, Christian Metz's groundbreaking description of the cinema screen helped to generate the new psychoanalytic theory of film (to which *Screen* made its essential contribution).[2] But Winnicott's patient is also giving voice to one of the most productive insights in writing about images in the past three decades – namely, as T.J. Clark succinctly put it in 1973: 'It takes more than seeing to make things visible.'[3] The limits of perception – what Freud, in another context, calls the 'blindness of the seeing eye' – become tangible in the imaginary scenario in which a child, standing before the mirror, *sees nothing*.[4] We are some way here from Jacques Lacan's fascination with the baby, captivated by the image of his reflection, craning towards the mirror.[5] This is not the domain of misrecognition, the lure of the image, that

4   Sigmund Freud, 'Studies on
    hysteria', *The Standard Edition of
    the Complete Psychological
    Works, Volume II*, ed. and trans.
    James Strachey, trans. Alan
    Sheridan (London: The Hogarth
    Press, 1955), p. 117.

5   Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: a Selection*,
    trans. Alan Sheridan (London:
    Tavistock Publications, 1977).

6   André Green, *The Work of the
    Negative* (London: Free
    Association Books, 1999).

7   Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, pp.
    116–17.

8   Ibid., p. 117.

9   Ronald Alley and John
    Rothenstein, *Francis Bacon:
    Catalogue raisonné and
    documentation* (London: Thames
    and Hudson, 1964).

10 Freud, 'The "uncanny"' (1919),
    *The Standard Edition of the
    Complete Psychological Works,
    Volume XVII*, ed. and trans.
    James Strachey (London: The
    Hogarth Press, 1955), p. 248.

psychoanalysis has done so much to explain. Instead there is nothing, seeing nothing. The phrase may strain our capacity to visualize, but the patient's sense of its terror draws on an experience of the visual field by no means reducible to the visible, to the perceptible image, as such.

It is central to the argument of this essay that psychoanalysis – and, in particular, a psychoanalysis oriented towards what André Green has described as the negative: blankness, non-presence, emptiness – can help us to explore this aspect of the visual.[6] It is no coincidence perhaps that, after sketching a verbal 'picture' of her mother to Winnicott, this patient turns to discussion of her great interest in Francis Bacon and Jacques Lacan, to the aesthetics of the visual and to psychoanalysis (she speaks directly of 'Le stade du miroir', the essay to which Winnicott acknowledges his debt at the beginning of his discussion).[7] Wondering whether or not to lend Winnicott a book she has been reading about Bacon – Ronald Alley and John Rothenstein's *Francis Bacon: Catalogue raisonné and documentation*, the catalogue to the retrospective of Bacon's work which opened at the Tate Gallery in May 1962 – the woman draws attention to Bacon's preference for glazing his paintings for exhibition: 'he likes to have glass over his pictures because then when people look at the picture what they see is not just a picture; they might in fact see themselves'.[8]

This is a detail picked up from Rothenstein's Introduction, in which he turns to that familiar metaphor of the mirror to confirm the shock of recognition agitating through Bacon's paintings ('to look at a painting by Bacon is to look into a mirror, and to see there our own afflictions and fears . . . of nameless threatened catastrophe').[9] But to be reflected, too, in the glass that protects the painting, to be *reflected into* the world of Bacon's pictures – that is a different wager, one that goes beyond the question of recognizing, or not, our afflictions in the painted image. Where are we, as spectators, if we can look out from, as well as into, Bacon's paintings? Will we recognize ourselves in that person who looks back from behind the glass? Perhaps not immediately. We may recall Freud's story of being startled by an intruder in his railway carriage: his own reflection, looking back at him from the mirror on an open door.[10] Bacon, too, may want something of that chance encounter with our reflection. At least, the possibility fascinates Winnicott's patient who, on one level, is providing a counterpart to the empty mirror with which she begins her session (at the beginning of his discussion of her case, Winnicott notes the coincidence between his patient's concerns and his own).

The child who cannot find her reflection; the painter who takes his chance with ours: Winnicott will track the ties between the two back to the earliest responses between mother and baby, to the idea of reflection as the condition of a selfhood forged through the work of looking and being looked at. There may be nothing new in this. One way or another, psychoanalysis conforms to that very modern impulse to cast the search for self, its origins and significance, in the form of a quest for the child,

11 Michael Eigen, *The Electrified Tightrope* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1993), p. 200.

12 Versed in that tradition, Winnicott shares some of its structuring assumptions: notably, its commitment to the (maternal) specular as source of love, intimacy and selfhood, which David Wellbery has described as 'a perfect, and wordless, exchange'. See David E. Wellbery, *The Specular Moment: Goethe's Early Lyric and the Beginnings of Romanticism* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 25. That psychoanalysis – as theory, as therapy, as institution – belongs to a history of vision is one of the underexplored themes in the dialogue between psychoanalysis and visual culture. But that it is worth observing mother and baby, mother and child, remains a basic assumption of a contemporary psychoanalysis indebted to Winnicott.

13 Lacan, *Écrits*, p. 4. Does it have to be the mother? This question haunts feminist readings of Winnicott, but perhaps the better question is how far anyone, including a mother, can facilitate this illusion, and for how long?

14 André Green, *On Private Madness* (London: Rebus Press, 1996), p. 287.

15 Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, p. 114.

16 My point here is not to set up an opposition between Lacan and Winnicott – the Lacanian concept of the real is obviously addressed to the blind spot of the visible. Whether or not it says quite what Winnicott allows to be said is one of the questions behind this essay.

17 Jacques Rancière, *The Future of the Image* (London: Verso, 2007), p. 7. Rancière continues: 'In the first place, the images of art are, as such, dissemblances. Secondly, the image is not exclusive to the visible.'

18 Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, p. 114.

the infant (as Michael Eigen puts it, we are living in the 'Age of the baby').[11] Equally, Winnicott is writing out of a Romantic and lyrical tradition that invests the look – prototypically, the gaze between mother and baby – as a form of unmediated, or at least preverbal, expression, a privileged means to intimacy.[12] In other words, at the heart of his approach to the question of how a baby comes to life is a mother's capacity, or willingness, to create the setting in which the baby can experience his absolute helplessness – his specific prematurity of birth, to borrow Lacan's phrasing – as a form of (magical, illusory) omnipotence.[13] The wager is extraordinary but, Winnicott insists, profoundly ordinary too. As Green puts it, Winnicott noticed 'what had been escaping everyone's attention': *the precursor of the mirror is the mother's face*.[14]

Looking, reflecting, recognizing: these are the terms that govern Winnicott's extraordinarily subtle exploration of that wager, his attention to the tension between seen and unseen, visible and invisible, at the origins of human mind and selfhood. To put these points another way: complicating what we think we know about the metaphor of the mirror, Winnicott's writing – in particular, 'Mirror-role of mother and family in child development' – offers a language through which to think about the alterity of the visual, its mediation of the modes of looking that have come to structure the experience of everyday life through the twentieth century and beyond. What idea of looking – of perception, of image – is at stake when a child looks in the mirror and sees nothing? Or when a painter does something to the human face (in Winnicott's view, Bacon 'forces his way into any present-day discussion of the face and the self')?[15] What happens to the dialogue between psychoanalysis and visual culture if we put our emphasis not on the concepts of fetishism and voyeurism, of suture and the gaze – concepts crucial to psychoanalytic film theory since the 1970s – but on that 'nothing': the image not seen, the look that does not happen?[16]

To engage such questions, psychoanalysis needs the provocation of the image, be it in words or pictures (the 'images of art', as Jacques Rancière has put it, 'are operations that produce a discrepancy, a dissemblance'[17]). Winnicott, for example, cannot get away from Bacon's repeated distortions of the human face, from his idea of Bacon as an artist 'painfully striving to be seen'.[18] Striking, in this instance, is the weight given to pain, to the intuition that, somewhere, a look is being withheld in (or by) the imaginary with which Bacon confronts his viewers. This is an insight that emerges on the cusp between psychoanalysis and the visual as Winnicott begins to make something visible, if not simply seen, in the object: a mode of looking, perhaps, but one reinflected, deeply distorted, by Bacon's paint. More precisely, it is as if, when he looks at a picture by Bacon, Winnicott sees a disfiguration of that Romantic vision of the mother and child, sheltered in and by a reflective gaze: William Wordsworth's 'blest Babe' who 'sinks to sleep/Rocked on his Mother's breast; who with his soul/Drinks in the feelings of his Mother's eye!' is

19 William Wordsworth, *The Prelude: the Four Texts (1798, 1799, 1805, 1850)*, ed. Jonathan Wordsworth (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 87.

20 Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, p. 112.

21 Santner, *Stranded Objects*, p. 125.

22 Eigen, *The Electrified Tightrope*, p. 123.

23 Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, p. 112.

24 Ibid., p. 22.

25 Ibid., p. 113.

only the most obvious example[19] – a disfigurement, in other words, of the scene that helps to structure Winnicott's own account of how a baby comes to life, comes to being in the world, through the mother's face. Wondering what the baby sees when he looks at that face, Winnicott discovers both baby and mother in their reciprocal exchange of looks. 'I am suggesting that, ordinarily', he concludes, 'what the baby sees is himself or herself. In other words, the mother is looking at the baby and *what she looks like is related to what she sees there*.'[20]

It may be that Winnicott is uncovering one of the basic structures of the visual field (what Eric Santner has described as the 'deep core' or 'libidinal fuel' of the various technologies of vision: 'the need for eyes that return a gaze'[21]). Certainly, the quality of Winnicott's attention to forms of visualization between infant and world – his interest in the creative, sometimes destructive, displacements of those forms – suggests the convergence between psychoanalysis and the diverse objects and practices of visual culture. Precursor of the mirror, for example, the mother's face may well be an original source of reflection and recognition, helping to secure the distinctions between stillness and movement, animate and non-animate, life and death (the smile, as Eigen puts it, is the 'home base of the human self'[22]). No doubt in losing sight of the mother's face the infant can lose himself; an ordinary anxiety of infantile life: no face, no reflection. 'This is what dead means', Winnicott muses, with the ruthlessness so characteristic of his writing.[23]

In this sense, part of the fascination of Winnicott's writing is its excavation of different ways of losing the self, of losing life, in relation to the realm of the visible. Such ways are various. Shadowed by her absence, certainly, the mother's face can also be *too present.* 'I can make my point,' Winnicott insists, 'by going straight over to the case of the baby whose mother reflects her own mood or, worse still, the rigidity of her own defences. In such a case what does the baby see?'[24] The question is essential. The mother's being there, being present, is not in itself enough. The baby can also lose himself *in* the mother's face; the mother's face, *as face*, can intrude on the infant by failing to reflect him; the baby looks, Winnicott concludes, but he does not see himself: 'what is seen is the mother's face. The mother's face is not then a mirror.'[25]

This is another form of impingement: the too-visible image of the mother interrupts – displaces, represses – the baby's going-on-being, that potential or virtual self emerging in the precious space between seen and unseen: a field of vision, but one by no means reducible to perception. On the contrary, it is as if looking has to withdraw from perception to discover the significance of the image for and to the self (or, more precisely, to this state that is not yet that of the self). Too brutal, too premature, perception – the mother's face as what is there is to be *seen* – interferes with the work of apperception, of holding the image in the space between mother and baby. This, for Winnicott, is a potentially catastrophic event, overturning the more ordinary, if still fraught, experience he describes as follows: 'the mother is looking at the baby and

26 Juliet Mitchell, 'Trauma, recognition and the place of language', *diacritics*, vol. 28, no. 4 (1998), p. 124.

what she looks like is related to what she sees there'. It is worth noting the precise, if elusive, phrasing: what the mother looks like (to her baby) is related, but not identical, to whatever she is given to be seen by her baby; or, as Juliet Mitchell inflects this point, 'a primal nonrecognition . . . would be everybody's human lot to some degree'.[26] The baby's experience of being alive, what he looks like and gives out into the world (his first creativity?), comes back to him, but differently, relatively: in other words, the not-seen, or the unreflected, belongs to the very mirroring that helps the child to discover an image of himself in the world, to assume the reflection of his experience that, in Winnicott's view, carries the burden of the distinction between (bare) living and *being alive*. It is, he writes, 'creative apperception . . . that makes the individual feel that life is worth living'.[27]

27 Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, p. 65.

What happens to that experience of non-recognition in the domains of visual culture? How might the visual object exacerbate, or compensate for, that structure of non-recognition? How do we 'hold' that structure in the visual life of culture? We may return to Metz's words: 'Thus film is like the mirror'. But do we really know what a mirror can be like? And how do you mirror 'nothing'? How do you give a likeness to what does not happen, or to what has not been?[28]

28 My discussion here is indebted to T.J. Clark, *The Sight of Death: an Experiment in Art Writing* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).

The image – as provocation, as distortion – is, I think, necessary to sustain such questions. Equally, a language alive to the work of thinking in images needs such questions. Something troubles, something agitates; sometimes 'in' the image, sometimes in the space that opens up between one image and another. Between, for example, the image of a mirror in which a child cannot see herself and Bacon's *Study for a Portait* (1953). Or, in the present instance, between Winnicott's 'Mirror-role of mother and family' and the opening sequence of *Die Siebente Kontinent/The Seventh Continent*, Michael Haneke's first film for cinema, released in 1989. For any viewer familiar with Metz's formulation – 'In fiction film, the characters look at one another' – or, more generally, with the language of cinema that such a formulation describes, this sequence is likely to be striking.[29] Put bluntly, for several minutes at the beginning of *The Seventh Continent*, Haneke *withholds the image of the face*. The face is not there, or only just there, just visible beyond the things that dominate the screen: a car number plate, a jet of water, a car headlamp, (part of) a wheel, a windscreen (through which you might catch sight of the lower part of a face behind the steering wheel). As the first credit rolls, the view shifts to the inside of a car. It is a shot from the rear: a man and woman are seated in the front, towards the left and right edges of the frame, their heads silhouetted against the windscreen. Immobile, silent, they stare straight ahead, neither speaking to nor looking at one another (figure 1).

29 Metz, 'The imaginary signifier', p. 57.

With its hold on that image, Haneke's long take does its work. Taking its time, *The Seventh Continent* centres its audience in the space between two, in the place where a look, or a word, that might happen *does not* – a not happening matched, or doubled, by the fact that this is a prolonged

Fig. 1.

All images from *Die Siebente Kontinent/The Seventh Continent* (Michael Haneke, 1989).

Fig. 2.

shot from behind the couple. Their faces are averted not only from one another but from us – an aversion that speaks, albeit confusedly, of estrangement, of introspection and perhaps of a kind of blind seeing, a gaze fixed on what is taking place beyond the windscreen: the automated progress of a carwash – its noise, its rhythm, its predictable sequence. One might sit and stare as if hypnotized, but as the car prepares to leave the automated wash there is a change of visual and narrative perspective. What might be a frontal view of the couple inside the car is still obscured by credits spread across the screen but, as the car moves forward, the credits move to the bottom of the screen. A shot through the windscreen reveals not two but three figures in the car: the silhouette of a small child, sitting in the back seat, is framed between the man and the woman. All three stare straight ahead (figure 2).

The perplexing quality of this moment has much to do with that sensibility, at once Romantic and modern, which invests the visual as a source of selfhood, of love, of life. The unexpected sight of the child

sitting behind and between the couple retrospectively subjectivizes the 'look' of Haneke's static take: she has been outside the film's field of vision, but we have been looking with her, from her 'place'. But what, precisely, is the film giving to be seen? What is Haneke visualizing in this image of a look that does not take place between these characters on screen? A form of absence, perhaps, a 'seeing nothing' – the negative of blankness? Not all at once: the significance of these images is left in suspense. The film needs to unfold further before we become more aware of the trouble in this sequence that concludes with the black screen that Haneke will use throughout to punctuate the film. Things could go in various directions from here. But in fact *The Seventh Continent* offers this sequence as a prelude to its depiction of the lives of a family found dead in their home on 17 February 1989 – the decision for death, for suicide, that turns this scene into one of the most powerful visions of a failure to *be alive* in contemporary European cinema.

'So, they don't really live, they do things.' In an interview with Serge Toubiana, Haneke describes his struggle to depict the tragedy of this family – first encountered, he notes, as a newspaper story – to represent on film whatever it is that is missing from their lives.[30] But what does it mean, to *do* rather than to *live*? Or, to give voice to the question implicit in both Haneke's statement and his film, what is life? What is it that makes life worth living? We may hear the echo with what Winnicott describes as one of the basic, but often avoided, questions of psychoanalysis: '*what life itself is about*'.[31]

As a film based on a family's suicide, *The Seventh Continent* poses such questions with special urgency – urgency that, as a director absorbed by the problem of what it means to look, Haneke refracts through the choreography of looking, and its failure. Riven by the look that does not happen in its opening sequence, *The Seventh Continent* will sustain that sense of absence throughout, displacing the family into the dense materiality of objects and actions that come to represent their daily lives (figure 3), objects and actions that also hold the film together. 'Three years, one day, and see what happens' is how Haneke describes his attempt to visualize whatever it is that has happened in the lives of a family – Georg, Anna and Eva – for whom, on one level, 'nothing' is wrong.

The Seventh Continent shows that seeing: the details of the lives lived by the family accumulating through the film, rhyming across the three 'days'. To do justice to that detail – visual, narrative, rhythmic – is beyond the reach of this essay. Nonetheless, in the opening sequence of the film it is possible to glimpse not only the 'how' but also perhaps the 'why' proposed by *The Seventh Continent*. Not the answers eschewed almost routinely by the film's director, but the horizons of understanding opened up by its visual and aural processing of its material, its handling of the transition between cinema and the event of the family members' deaths: bluntly, its displacement of those deaths onto film. 'So how do you impact the viewer more deeply?' In describing his cinema, Haneke

30   Michael Haneke, in interview with Serge Toubiana, *The Haneke Trilogy* (Tartan DVD, 2006). Unless otherwise noted, all references to Haneke's comments on the film are taken from this interview.

31   Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, p. 98.

Fig 3.

also gives voice to its assumption that there is a form of death at work in present regimes of the image: death of feeling and thought, of imagination and time (note that, alongside *Benny's Video* [1993] and *71 Fragments of a Chronology of Chance* [1995], *The Seventh Continent* belongs to the 'glaciation trilogy' that initiated Haneke's contribution to European cinema).

It is a death that inhabits the details of this film, from its opening shot in which the camera fixes on the car numberplate – the letter 'L' identifying the city in which the film is set, though not shot, as Linz (claimed by Hitler as the city of his imaginary future). In other words, running alongside the routinization of life and its objects, there is a ferocious political history embedded in *The Seventh Continent*. Or, more precisely, political histories. The radio, so often framing or containing the opening shots of each day, refracts routine through the 'alarms' of the news: specifically, in Part One, the catastrophe of the Iran–Iraq conflict. Not that this catastrophe appears to carry any impact onscreen. The family members enter the frame in bits and pieces – arms, hands, legs, feet, heads – to continue their morning routine. Or perhaps that is how the idea of violence – never far from Haneke's screen – *is* there: the visual dismemberment of the family, pushed to the edge of the screen, gives image to the inhumanity of a life that, by waking up to violence, becomes immune to it (to those 'bits of pseudo-information in rapid succession', in Haneke's phrase, so characteristic of radio and television).

In this sense, part of the wager of *The Seventh Continent* is to bring life back to the image, to the modes of seeing that will be brought to bear on it – not least, perhaps, the form of hypnotized distraction that confronts us in the opening scene: a mindless staring that comes to take the place of a look, or a word, between the characters on screen. In fact, Georg and Anna mime the classic posture of the cinema spectator: in a darkened space, immobile, looking straight at a screen – a miming that anticipates the concluding sequence of the film in which the family's death is

mediated by the television screen (the television is virtually the only object to have survived the methodical destruction of their home). On screen – Haneke's as well as that of the television – Jennifer Rush's performance of 'The Power of Love' is a sudden, visible, reminder of what has not been visible throughout this film: a face – mobile, expressive, alive – looking back at the audience that trains its gaze upon her.

To push the point, then: it is not until the family assumes the role of (half-dead) spectators in front of the television that we see a 'live' face, or hear a voice driven by emotion (the voice and face of television offering its love and protection from the world: 'I'll do all that I can' is one of the song's refrains [figure 4]). A performance of aliveness, edited into expression, mobility and movement: 'trained to liveliness', as Winnicott might say. In 1935, he pointed to the everyday pleasures of the wireless ('left on interminably' – like the television in *The Seventh Continent*), of music hall, and of the lights of the modern city as a performance of life, a reassurance against feelings of death inside: 'Here is LIFE', not inside but outside.[32] This deadness is there from the beginning of *The Seventh Continent*, visualized first in the look that does not happen, the face that is not seen; or which, when seen, cannot be felt. The immobility of the actors' faces is one of the most striking aspects of this film, so much so that expression, when it does come, appears as a form of convulsion that the face can only resist; as, for example, when Anna breaks down in the second scene in the carwash during which, crucially, the looks withheld in that opening sequence are finally exchanged.

Since the release of *The Seventh Continent*, it has been part of the work of Haneke's cinema to *look back* at its audience by *looking at looking*, even perhaps to use cinema to make a difference to looking. Cinema, Haneke has suggested, retains its capacity to 'let us experience the world anew', to interrupt the visual flow that has become part of the experience

32 D.W. Winnicott, *Through Paediatrics to Psychoanalysis: Collected Papers* (London: Karnac Books, 1987), p. 131.

Fig 4.

33 'The world that is known', interview with Christopher Sharrett, *Kinoeye: New Perspectives on European Film*, http://www.kinoeye.org/04/01/interview01.php [accessed 12 August 2007].

34 For further discussion on this idea, see Vicky Lebeau, *Childhood and Cinema* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008).

of everyday life. 'The long take', he suggests, 'is an aesthetic means to accomplish this.'[33] It is an optimistic statement, one that depends on a strong association between the spectator's capacity for experience – thought, feeling, imagination – and the movement of the image on screen (the idea of cinema as a type of mime of both mind and world is nearly as old as the medium itself).[34] Slow the image down, and you may (re)attach the mind to the shot, to the work of looking – *noticing*, *taking in* – and reflecting. Get to know the image, Haneke seems to say. Live with it, live in it, for a few moments longer. Live in that space, in this instance, where two people do not look at one another, where a form of nothing is what comes to the foreground of the field of vision – and stays there.

What does it mean to look in order to come alive? This question, I want to suggest, belongs as much to Haneke as to Winnicott, as much to an aesthetics of the visual as to psychoanalysis. Or perhaps to the space between them, a space that puts looking and image into question: the question of looking, looking as a question, agitates through both. To say this is to suggest that psychoanalysis – in particular the theoretical ambition announced in that initial turn towards the mirror – remains essential to our understanding of the visual, of what comes to be seen as well as what appears to go missing in the exchange of looks between two: affect, selfhood, life. If this is a topic vital to the contemporary study of visual fields, it is because it confronts us with the question of what is involved in an art of looking that is more than looking, of what looking may have to do with whatever it is that makes life 'life' – or, by contrast, makes of life a form of death.

Deleuzian spectatorship

RICHARD RUSHTON

Deleuze's writings have been received as important antitheses to the structuralist and psychoanalytic approaches to film studies of the 1970s and 1980s, the kind of work made famous in Anglo-American film studies by this journal. At one level, Deleuze was felt to have introduced a perspective on film studies that was at odds with *Screen* Theory's insistence on the *passivity* of the cinema spectator, the latter being a notion indebted to theories of psychoanalysis and articulated in various ways by Christian Metz, Laura Mulvey, Stephen Heath, Peter Wollen, Colin MacCabe, Jean-Louis Baudry and others (and not just in *Screen*, but in also *Film Quarterly*, *Afterimage* and *Camera Obscura*). Rather than spectators passively deprived of their bodies and held in thrall to an ideological apparatus, Deleuze's writings gave rise to the possibility of spectators who engaged their bodies and senses in ways that made *Screen* Theory seem incorrigibly shortsighted. And yet, if Deleuze seems to offer something beyond the notion of a passive spectator, what kind of spectator does he presume? Does Deleuze demonstrate some of the *active* capabilities of the cinema spectator? Or, more pertinently, does Deleuze even have a notion of a cinema spectator – a viewer or audience member who watches and listens to a film – at all? Does he envisage things called *subjects* which are engaged in a cinematic situation? These are somewhat difficult questions, and if Deleuze has answers to them they are not at all straightforward.

My aim here is to put forward a number of propositions on Deleuzian spectatorship which might seem a little strange to some readers. These propositions are made against the backdrop of *Screen* Theory. I make them in order to foreground what is arguably essential to a Deleuzian

conception of cinema spectatorship. Disconcerting for many readers might be the fact that I consider Deleuze's spectator to be one that eschews activity – or, at least, for Deleuze the spectator is someone whose circumstances are very much at odds with what film studies, in the wake of *Screen* Theory, has defined as the activities of film viewing. In short, I believe Deleuze's spectator to be something which (or someone who) is ineluctably passive; that this passivity signals something definitively radical in Deleuze's approach; and furthermore that this conception of passive spectatorship allows some access to understanding Deleuze's overall project in the *Cinema* books.[1] This might seem like a lot to address in a short essay, but I hope if nothing else at least to chart the course of some future research.

As I already noted, one way in which Deleuze has been taken up by film studies is as a way of repudiating some aspects of *Screen* Theory. Thus, for example, we have Steven Shaviro's groundbreaking *The Cinematic Body*, which uses Deleuzian philosophy to open up new cinematic territories beyond the ocularcentric, psychoanalytically focused discourses of *Screen* Theory.[2] Arguing quite explicitly against *Screen* Theory, Shaviro focuses on the cinematic realms of affective and bodily sensation found in Deleuze's works. Shaviro's work is echoed in a number of subsequent books – Barbara Kennedy's *Deleuze and Cinema*, Patricia Pisters's *The Matrix of Visual Culture*, Laura Marks's *The Skin of the Film* – all of which foreground the body's cinematic possibilities by way of Deleuzian theory, as against the all-seeing, subject-centred approaches of *Screen* Theory.[3]

However, the first point to be made about each of these books and their focus on Deleuzian aspects of the cinematic body is that they in no way stand as repudiations of the main tenets of *Screen* Theory. *Screen* Theory was as set against ocularcentrism as it was against the notion of an all-seeing, masterful subject. Put simply, the only reason *Screen* Theory ever articulated a notion of passive spectatorship was in order to be resoundingly critical of that passivity. *Screen* Theory was dedicated to finding modes of audience engagement that were not passive; and thus if Deleuzian approaches to cinema are critical of passive modes of spectatorship in favour of 'bodily' modes of engagement, then they are merely criticizing precisely the same things as the *Screen* theorists were. Also, if *Screen* Theory did use psychoanalysis, then to some extent it did so in order to invent ways of providing a cinematic body. As Stephen Heath put it emphatically in his essay 'Film performance', at least one aim of *Screen* Theory was to define a cinema that 'makes a body'.[4] So, a first point, then, is to realize that much of the work on Deleuze that has purported to redirect the debates that informed *Screen* Theory are not really repositioning such debates. Instead, it is actually replaying those debates. This is only a first point, however, for what is even more intriguing about the work alluded to above is that it relies for the most part on Deleuze's non-cinematic writings. Instead of turning to his *Cinema* books, this work tends to rely on the reformulations of

1 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: the Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone Press, 1986); *Cinema 2: the Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Athlone Press, 1989).

2 Steven Shaviro, *The Cinematic Body* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

3 Barbara Kennedy, *Deleuze and Cinema: the Aesthetics of Sensation* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000); Patricia Pisters, *The Matrix of Visual Culture: Working with Deleuze in Film Theory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); Laura Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and the Senses* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

4 Stephen Heath, 'Film performance', in *Questions of Cinema* (London: Macmillan, 1981), p. 129.

5   Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari,
    *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and
    Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert
    Hurley et al. (London: Athlone
    Press, 1984); *A Thousand
    Plateaus: Capitalism and
    Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian
    Massumi (Minneapolis, MN:
    University of Minnesota Press,
    1987).

6   D.N. Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze's
    Time Machine* (Durham, NC: Duke
    University Press, 1997); Ronald
    Bogue, *Deleuze on Cinema*
    (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003).

7   Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze's Time
    Machine*, p. xi.

psychoanalytic theory that Deleuze undertook with Félix Guattari.[5] It is hard to understand quite why film scholars felt they could ditch – or at least sidestep – Deleuze's *Cinema* books in favour of his other formulations.

Perhaps such research has avoided Deleuze's *Cinema* books because those books are exceptionally difficult, especially inasmuch as they discard most of the language traditionally associated with film studies. Deleuze simply ignores the language associated with *Screen* Theory: suture, gaze, ideological apparatus, reality effect, and so on. Even the two fine English-language exegeses of the *Cinema* books, by D.N. Rodowick and Ronald Bogue, tend to remain reluctant to pull Deleuze's classifications into too close a contact with other strands of contemporary film studies.[6] Rodowick claims early in his book, for example, that 'Rather than trying to incorporate Deleuze in the extant schemas for understanding the historical development of anglophone film theory, I believe that *The Movement-Image* and *The Time-Image* are more productively read as a challenge to those schemas'.[7]

So Deleuze remains strangely out of position in mainstream film studies. There is, I believe, a very specific reason for this: Deleuze has no explicit conception of the *cinema spectator*. His discourses and categories seem bereft of any thoughts about viewers, beholders or audiences – the people who go to the cinema. When so much of the study of cinema has been devoted to questions of spectators and audiences – for *Screen* Theory, yes, but also for movements that have claimed to supplant *Screen* Theory, such as cognitivism, cultural studies and the various modes of reception theory – Deleuze's failure to have a theory of spectatorship places him quite simply out of the loop in the major conversations of film studies. Nevertheless, I do believe an implicit theory of spectatorship can be found in the *Cinema* books.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Deleuze's spectator is that she/he is passive in a way that even the worst excesses of *Screen* Theory would never have dared consider. *Screen* Theory – generalizations are necessary here – typically posited a distinction between two types of cinematic engagement: one which was passive and another which was active. Passive spectators were the products of mainstream, orthodox, Hollywood cinema, while active spectators were the hoped-for products of an avant-garde cinema. This formulation was indebted to Brecht, and is one that remains somewhat in vogue even today. In one of *Screen* Theory's classic articles, an essay by Colin MacCabe on 'The politics of separation', the words of Brecht are directly quoted, words which posit the grave sin of a spectator's fusion with the action of a play in a way that served as a template for *Screen* Theory's derision for the cinema spectator's fusion with the screen:

> The process of fusion extends to the spectator who gets thrown into the melting pot . . . and becomes a passive (suffering) part of the total work of art. Witchcraft of this sort must, of course, be fought against. What

8 Quoted in Colin MacCabe, 'The politics of separation', *Screen,* vol. 16, no. 4 (1975), p. 48.

9 Across the *Cinema* books Deleuze refers to such states as ones of a 'spiritual automaton', while in a late interview he declared a preference for terms such as *pre-individual singularities* or *non-personal individuations* instead of 'subjects'. See Deleuze, 'Response to a question of the subject', in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews, 1975–1995* (New York, NY: Semiotext(e), 2006), p. 351.

10 See Deleuze, *Cinema 1: the Movement-Image*, pp. 57–8.

11 Gilles Deleuze, 'The brain is the screen', in Gregory Flaxman (ed.), *The Brain is the Screen: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Cinema* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 366.

is intended to produce hypnosis, is likely to induce sordid intoxication, or creates fog, has got to be given up.[8]

Passive spectators are emphatically what must be avoided, for such spectators can only be the subjects of witchcraft and hypnosis. As an antidote to this passive intoxication, the aim of a positive or progressive cinema is one of an active spectatorship where spectators remain in control of their senses and thoughts. Very few scholars in film studies have ever defended a passive spectator, from the politically motivated call for active responses to society's contradictions, through David Bordwell's defence of the active cognitive activities of the beholder, to cultural studies' articulations of the complex interactions of which viewers are capable.

What, then, is Deleuze's spectator? First of all, Deleuze's spectator cannot be said to exist prior to a film. Rather, it is created almost entirely by the film. There is no prior 'subject' to be posited as existing anterior to the happening of the filmic event; or if there is, then this subjectivity is thoroughly dismantled by the film that unfolds in front of this spectatorial entity which, for all intents and purposes, is a 'non-subject'.[9] Deleuze's articulations of this position are somewhat obfuscatory, but they can be found at the beginning of *Cinema 1*, where he pits the philosophy of Henri Bergson against the conceptions of phenomenological philosophy. He sums up the conflict by declaring that for phenomenology consciousness is *consciousness of something*, whereas for Bergson *consciousness is something*. Instead of consciousness being separated from that of which it is conscious, Bergson, and Deleuze after him, conceive of consciousness as something that is conjoined with those somethings with which it comes into contact. Consciousness therefore does not conceive of things by *becoming conscious* of them, but instead, *consciousness is itself formed by things*.[10]

If we extend this understanding of consciousness to the cinema – as Deleuze does – then our engagement with a film is not a process of becoming conscious of what is happening in a film, but, rather, *our consciousness is formed by what happens in the film*. (Another way of expressing this problematic can be found in Deleuze's claim that 'the brain is the screen': 'The circuits and linkages of the brain don't preexist the stimuli, corpuscles and particles [*grains*] that trace them'.[11]) All of this is really one way of saying that, for Deleuze, the spectator is *fused with* the film; there is no spectator who watches (and listens to) a film, for the spectator is only ever *formed by* watching (and listening to) a film. One might say that for Deleuze there are no subjects who go to the cinema; the identities, backgrounds, tastes and predilections of those who might presume to go to the cinema are irrelevant. Rather, there are only subjectivities *formed by* the cinema, by the act of going to the cinema and experiencing a film. This is indeed a process of fusion, a fusion between spectator and screen, in the worst ways that Brecht or any *Screen* theorist might have been able to imagine. From Deleuze's point of view,

however, all of the negative terms employed by Brecht can be taken as positives: cinema is a kind of witchcraft that induces hypnosis, intoxication and fog. Quite contrary to Brecht and *Screen* Theory, these, for Deleuze, are some of the positive things cinema can do.

One way to characterize broadly the difference between *Screen* Theory and Deleuze's approach to cinema is to see the difference as one between theory and philosophy. The project of *Screen* Theory was inspired by an Althusserian commitment to 'Theory' as that which precedes and designates what any practice is capable of achieving. Theory was therefore conceived as an essential ally of and precursor to practice, so that the abiding aim of *Screen* Theory was to designate the parameters of a new cinema, a cinema primarily based on the experiments of the avant garde. In addition to this, for *Screen* Theory, the invention of a new cinema was a necessary step in the invention of a new society; a society which, by definition, would be composed of human beings who could no longer be called 'subjects' (in the sense specifically given to this term by Althusser).[12] By contrast, Deleuze's cinematic philosophy is an attempt to chart some of the consequences to which cinema has given rise. Those consequences are 'blocs of sensations'[13] – something Deleuze ascribes generally to works of art – or, more explicitly in the case of cinema, the determination to uncover the 'unthought' in thought (to think that which is unthinkable).[14] For Deleuze, such sensations or thoughts are not things that can be possessed by or attributed to subjects, for they are, Deleuze writes (with Guattari), 'independent of a state of those who experience them'.[15] If the project of *Screen* Theory was one of transforming subjectivities so that they would no longer be subjects, then Deleuze's cinematic philosophy is from the beginning one which tries to go beyond subjectivity.

What can Deleuze hope to gain from such formulations; and, furthermore, what can *we* hope to gain? When so much theorization in the humanities has been predicated on finding ways in which viewers, readers, beholders or listeners might critically analyze their own responses to cultural objects or novels or paintings – that is, to engage critically in reflective thought processes about the objects with which they come into contact – what can it mean for Deleuze to promote such thoroughly non-reflexive, passive, uncritical responsiveness? In order to understand Deleuze's intention, we need to make an important distinction in the way we think about the spectator's relationship to any film. This distinction is one between *absorption* and *immersion*.

The mode of absorption is one in which the spectator *goes into* the film – that is, is absorbed in or by the film – whereas in the mode of immersion the film *comes out* to the spectator so as to surround and envelop her/him. These are different kinds of movement – one in which the spectator is drawn into the film, and an opposite one whereby the film comes out towards the spectator – and each offers a significantly different mode of engagement. Absorption is a term used most famously in recent times by the art historian Michael Fried. Fried utilizes the

12 See Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (notes toward an investigation)', in *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 1971), pp. 85–132.

13 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson (London: Verso, 1994), p. 164.

14 Deleuze, *Cinema 2: the Time-Image*, p. 169.

15 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 164.

notion of absorption in order to denote the mode of address central to the history and conception of modernist painting. The term, for Fried, means something like the depiction of a world from which the viewer is excluded but whose effect and success relies on the viewer believing or imagining that she/he is in fact included in that depiction of a world. If this term can be made useful for describing a certain kind of cinematic engagement (as I have argued elsewhere[16]), then perhaps the absorptive experience can be reduced to offering the feeling that while watching a film, '*you are there*', while simultaneously producing the acknowledgment that '*you cannot be there*'.

Immersion is something rather different. Instead of feeling, as with absorption, that you are entering the film, with immersion comes the sensation that the film is *entering your own space*, perhaps even that it is entering your own body.[17] This way of conceiving of film has become a very popular mode of contemporary theorizing, whether one is writing of expanded cinema, new media, high octane blockbuster cinema, horror or 'body genre' cinema or even, it must be added, Deleuzian conceptions of cinematic engagement. Much has been made of Deleuze's notions of affect and the affection-image, for the definition he gathers from Henri Bergson states that affect is 'that part or aspect of the inside of my body which we mix with the image of external bodies'.[18] Most commentators seem to have taken this to mean that for affection, external bodies come out towards me so as to mix with my own body. They have thus equated Deleuze's conception of affect with what I am here calling immersion.

One might perhaps more fruitfully conceive of such affective participation in an *absorptive* way; that is, in terms of the way that a body can be imaginarily projected into the image. This is the direction in which I prefer to take Deleuze's analyses. I tend to feel that Fried's formulations on absorption can take us a long way towards understanding the position Deleuze occupies. For example, at one point in his book *Courbet's Realism*, Fried discusses the extraordinary canvas The Wheat-Sifters (figure 1). He convincingly argues that the figures in the painting are in some sense surrogates for those viewing the painting, but also that the two sifters who are engaged in the activity of sifting are not there merely to *represent* those people and those actions. In other words, they are not merely there to be looked at. Rather, Fried claims that the type of engagement a viewer has with this painting and with these figures is 'no longer one of beholding but a mode of identification in which vision as such is all but elided'.[19] This is one of the astonishing aspects of absorption: not merely that one can be looking in on another world, but also that one can have the sensation of bodily occupying that space in another world, the sensation of occupying the space of another being. To put it bluntly, one of the possibilities which absorption holds forth is *the possibility of being another being*.

Another art historian, T.J. Clark, has recently tried to call this 'the moment of otherness' in Courbet's paintings: 'the moment of otherness and matter-of-factness, of objectivity and self-loss'.[20] What absorption

16   Richard Rushton, 'Early, classical and modern cinema', *Screen*, vol. 45, no. 3 (2004), pp. 226–44.

17   I am avoiding recourse to current theorizations of immersion, quite simply because they are so disparate and inexact. However, some readers might wish to consult the following: Oliver Grau, *Virtual Art: from Illusion to Immersion* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003); Ron Burnett, *How Images Think* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004); Martin Reiser and Andrea Zapp (eds), *New Screen Media: Cinema/Art/Narrative* (London: British Film Institute, 2002); Oliver Grau (ed.), *MediaArtHistories* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).

18   Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy M. Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York, NY: Zone Books, 1988), p. 58.

19   Michael Fried, *Courbet's Realism* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 153.

20   T.J. Clark, 'The special motion of a hand: Courbet and Poussin at the Met', *London Review of Books*, 24 April 2008, p. 6.

encourages in the beholder is a sensation that one is no longer oneself, that one has lost one's selfhood in order to become something *other*, that one has lost the coordinates by which one's subjectivity can be defined in order to occupy a position that is in some sense objective rather than subjective (I become an object rather than a subject might be one way to think of it).

Absorption, I would argue, goes some way towards describing Deleuze's approach to cinema spectatorship. For him, cinema is a matter of placing oneself where one is not, of becoming someone or something one is not. That is, cinema, for Deleuze, offers the possibility of becoming other than what one is, of being someone (or something) else.

Immersion is somewhat different from absorption. Instead of the promise of becoming other which is offered by absorption, immersion offers only the option of remaining firmly within the bounds of one's own selfhood. A mode of immersion is one where the film comes to me so as to attract me, arouse me, solicit me; and it can do so only on the basis of an agreement or contract – it can canvass me only insofar as an accord is struck and consent agreed. At all times the immersive situation is one which is provided for me and whose defining presence is to make me part of its *raison d'être*. In other words, if it is immersive, the film is there *for me*; not to offer the possibility of my becoming something or someone else, but to offer only the affirmation of the me that is me. (What I am calling immersion is roughly equivalent to what Fried calls *theatricality* in the history of art.[21])

The trajectory of Laura Mulvey's work offers an interesting case here, for she moves from the (in)famous active–male/passive–female split of 1975's 'Visual pleasure' article through to a dazzling kaleidoscope of

21 See Michael Fried, 'Art and objecthood', in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 148–72; *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980). I should stress that *immersion* is a term I am using in my own way, for Fried often uses 'absorption' and 'immersion' interchangeably. See, for example, his short essay on Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno's 2006 film, *Zidane: a 21st Century Portrait*, 'Absorbed in the action', *Artforum*, vol. 45, no. 1 (2006), pp. 333–5, 398.

22 Laura Mulvey, *Death 24 x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006).

23 Laura Mulvey, 'Notes on Sirk and melodrama', in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989), pp. 39–44; and 'Delaying cinema', in *Death 24 x a Second*, pp. 144–60.

spectatorial terms in her most recent work: a deciphering spectator, a pensive spectator, a possessive spectator, an alert spectator – any kind of spectator, it seems, so long as this spectator is *doing things* and is not in any way passive. Even more important, perhaps, in Mulvey's recent *Death 24 x a Second*,[22] is the sense of an historical shift, a belief that up until the 1970s the grounding of the cinematic experience in a theatrical setting – of spectators in a theatre – facilitated modes of spectatorship that were inherently passive, whereas contemporary technologies – video and DVD – break apart the confines of that necessary passivity and give the viewer a freedom to navigate, interact and engage with cinema's images in an entirely active manner.

What the evolution of Mulvey's work entails is none other than a move from theorizing Brechtian distanciation and alienation to theorizing something approaching immersion.[23] For today – the main example of this occurs in her account of Sirk's *Imitation of Life* (1959) – analysis has moved from a Brechtian consideration of Sirkian melodramatic distanciation where, significantly, it was the structures and ruptures of the film's unfolding text that were central, to a point where the text itself becomes a plaything of the remote control. Now it is no longer necessary for the film itself to provide the ruptures and fissures of form, but instead it is the remote control which manipulates the DVD and which thus gives the viewer access to the intricacies of Sirk's subversive formal efforts. For Mulvey, it is now the actions, interactions and button-pushings of the spectator that offer ways of radicalizing filmic texts. The remote control, the pause and rewind of the DVD, offer the spectator the opportunity to halt any film – to 'delay' cinema, as Mulvey calls it – so that such films can be subject to the spectator's mastery: the film can thus be reconfigured by me in such a way as to be *for me*. With the DVD, as Mulvey manipulates it, and in the mode that I am here calling immersion, any film loses its autonomy, it loses its separation from me, it loses its challenge to me, and merely becomes an object *for me*.

Federico Fellini foresaw this evolution nearly twenty-five years ago in a cynically damning jibe at the conveniences of the television remote control. The point he wished to make is that, with modes of reception like immersion or interactivity, the cinema will no longer be able to offer any challenges to spectators. Any challenges can be instantly dismissed, obliterated, so that that the sanctity of any viewing subject will not be ruffled.

> . . . how can one not consider that device which, by pressing a button, shows you forty films, one after another? Television, violence, the fear of thinking, of facing reality. How can one make a family leave their house? Father is in his underwear, the wife is in her slip, the children are sprawled on the sofa or on the floor, all in front of the television which provides them with films of every kind, the whole of cinema from its birth to the present day. What's more, there's the exaltation that pressing a button gives them, feeling that they are controlling the

world. Bergman has always intimidated them? Oh well, they press a button and cancel him, annul him. Antonioni has always made them uneasy? Well, they press a button and get rid of him. It is a deliverance from any kind of frustration, a celebration of the most brutal collective vendetta.[24]

If writers are keen to promote immersion and a push-button realm of interactivity, then what they are desiring is a filmic object that will answer their own fantasies, fantasies that can only ever be drawn in their own image. Immersion is a certain refusal to go outside of oneself, a refusal of ecstasy, a denial of the possibility of becoming other; an attitude of maintaining the certainty of one's own thoughts and refusing the invitation to think another's thoughts or to experience another's sensations. One might consider this as a refusal of passivity: with immersion one must insist on one's self remaining active, in control, in order that one remain a self-certain self, reflexively, reflectively, endlessly folding back onto the oneness of a self.

In an intellectual environment where the dominant mode of theorizing a spectator's or reader's relation to a film, text or artwork has been all about defining and maintaining levels of self-control over what one sees and experiences – for *Screen* Theory as much as for cultural studies, whether one begins with Brecht, Barthes or Stuart Hall – Deleuze throws down a quite extraordinary and risky challenge: that we lose control of ourselves, undo ourselves, forget ourselves while in front of the cinema screen. Only then will we be able to loosen the shackles of our existing subjectivities and open ourselves up to other ways of experiencing and knowing. Of course, this is by no means a tactic free of peril – one can be as much absorbed by *Triumph of the Will* (Leni Riefenstahl, 1935) as by *Sans soleil* (Chris Marker, 1983); and films can deliver to us the brains of idiots as much as it can deliver the brains of inspiration or genius.[25] That, however, for Deleuze, is a challenge we should be willing to face.

24 Federico Fellini, 'The cinema is finished. But *The Ship Sails On* (interview)', in Costanzo Costantini (ed.), *Fellini on Fellini* (London: Faber and Faber, 1994), p. 124.

25 Deleuze writes that 'The screen, that is ourselves, can be the deficient brain of an idiot as easily as a creative brain'. Deleuze, 'The brain is the screen', p. 366.

Part 2

Filmic experience

FRANCESCO CASETTI

Let us try to consider cinema not for the technology it has developed, nor for the productive systems that have characterized it, nor for the films that have appeared within it, nor even in terms of the effects they have created. Let us try instead to rethink the type of experience that spectators have lived in front of a cinematic screen. It is an experience that began to define itself on the night of 28 December 1895, with the Lumière projections in the Salon Indien, and that was subsequently developed and perfected through film theatres, sound, colour, the panoramic screen, and so on – an experience that today faces a radical transformation in coincidence with the end of two of the most characteristic traits of cinema: its status as a photographic medium and its identity as a collective show.

The term *experience* has a specific (and binding) meaning here. On the one hand, it refers to the act of exposing ourselves to something that surprises and captures us ('to experience'). On the other hand, it relates to the act of reelaborating this exposition into a knowledge and a competence, so that we are then richer in the face of things, since we are able to master them ('to have experience'). Indeed, *filmic experience* is arguably both that moment when images (and sounds) on a screen arrogantly engage our senses and also that moment when they trigger a comprehension that concerns, reflexively, what we are viewing and the very fact of viewing it. We have, then, a stretching of attention while facing something that strikes us, whilst we also have a 'knowing-how' to look and a 'knowing-that' we are looking, which make us protagonists of what is happening to us. From this point of view, filmic experience is something more than film reception – more than an interpretation or a

consumption. It is a situation which combines sensory or cognitive 'excess' (there is something that touches or addresses us, outside the taken-for-granted) to the 'recognition' of what we are exposed to and the fact that we are exposed to it (a recognition which makes us redefine ourselves and our surroundings). An excess and a recognition: it is thanks to these two elements that we 'live' a situation, recuperating contact with what we are viewing; and that at the same time we frame it, giving it a meaning. It is thanks to these two elements that we face things; and that at the same time we enrich our lives to the extent that we may confront new events.[1]

Why prioritize filmic experience? Why argue that it is central to film studies, or suggest that it might be discussed in terms of a historic typology? At least three points are relevant here. Firstly, a study of filmic experience allows us better to understand the role of cinema in twentieth-century culture. What cinema offered, in fact, was a space in which a number of new, unexpected, and even shocking, elements (novel perceptual forms, aspects of reality, questions and dilemmas) were able to play in the social scene, finding acknowledgment and legitimation. In this sense, cinema brought to a climax the dynamic of excess and recognition. At the same time, cinema challenged the very notion of experience. On the one hand, it was no longer the world that gave itself up to our senses, but an image of the world, filtered by and through technology. As Walter Benjamin reminds us, 'The vision of immediate reality [has become] the Blue Flower in the land of technology'.[2] On the other hand, cinema seemed to give us back the world as nothing else could: it allowed us not only to 'see anew' but also 'as if for the first time', refounding our relationship with and to reality. 'Man will go back to being visible', said Béla Balázs in 1924.[3] The capacity to connect excess and recognition, as well as the dialectic between immediacy and mediation, make cinema one of the touchstones of modernity.[4] It is against this backdrop that the present discussion must be situated.

Secondly, filmic experience allows us better to articulate the history of cinema. Indeed, it helps us understand the historical meaning of viewing a film, as well as the ways in which vision has been historically structured. What has watching a film signified? When can we say that we have done this? And why have we done it? If we start from these questions – questions of experience – we may outline a partially new course of events, based on the reasons and on the ways in which spectators faced an 'excess' and 'recognized' it. In what follows, I shall underline how early cinema embraced the provocative elements of modernity and inserted them into a new popular culture; how classical cinema offered a sense of freedom to the spectator, but controlled it through an institution; how so-called modern cinema destroyed the 'safe' position of its spectator in order to gain a more open sense of subjectivity and of reality; and how contemporary cinema responds to the challenges of an overwhelming media landscape, giving us the opportunity to 're-aestheticize' our lives.

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5 It is interesting to read, in this light, a series of Italian contributions from the first fifteen years of the twentieth century: for instance, Giovanni Papini, 'La filosofia del cinematografo', *La Stampa*, vol. XLI, 18 May 1907; Enrico Thovez, 'L'arte di celluloide', *La Stampa*, vol. XLII, no. 209, 29 July 1908; Lucio D'Ambra, 'Il museo dell'attimo fuggente', *La Tribuna illustrata*, vol. XXII, no. 20, 17–24 May 1914; Luigi Pirandello, 'Si gira', *Nuova Antologia*, June–August 1915.

6 On this theme see the preeminent contribution by Louis Delluc, *Le cinéma, art populaire* (1921), now in Delluc, *Ecrits cinématographiques, 11/2: Le cinéma au quotidien* (Paris: Cinémathèque Française, 1990), pp. 279–88.

7 Miriam Hansen has underlined the cinema's game-like nature in her essay 'Room-for-play: Benjamin's gamble with cinema', *October*, no. 109 (2004), pp. 3–45.

8 See especially Ricciotto Canudo, 'Lettere d'arte. Trionfo del cinematografo', *Nuovo Giornale*, 25 Novembre 1908, now in *Filmcritica*, vol. XXVIII, no. 278 (1977), pp. 296–302. Among the recent contributions which retrace this period, a great insight in this direction is provided by Tom Gunning, 'An aesthetic of astonishment: early film and the (in)credulous spectator', in Linda Williams (ed.), *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995), pp. 114–33.

This third issue is important. Cinema today is expanding its borders, but also risks losing its identity. When we see a film – or something similar to a film – on YouTube or on a mobile phone, are we still in the terrain of cinema, or have we moved elsewhere? We may answer this question only if we define what a filmic experience is – and conversely what a media experience or non-experience is. I shall devote my conclusion to this point.

Early cinema largely characterized filmic experience in terms of modernity and popularity. On the one hand, filmic experience seems to include all of the typical traits of its time: it realized a need for economy, a taste for speed, an investment in the progressive mechanization of life and the growing importance of contingent phenomena; and its flux could be paralleled with other flowing forms, such as the stream of consciousness.[5] On the other hand, filmic experience was also accessible to everyone: it joined a cross-border and a cross-cultural public to an easily accessible language, it proposed themes of general interest and it expressed common values.[6] In short, cinema reflected its age whilst at the same time turning to a universal audience. Today, it is evident that film 're-transcribed' the modern experience that was actually lived in factories, in the metropolis, even in the trenches of World War I. In this context, cinema 'reinvented' the modern just as it 'reinvented' the popular. What is interesting about this is that the two 'reinventions' overlapped. On the one hand, cinema joined modernity to the sphere of the show or to the space of the collective game, and film after film popularized this modernity.[7] On the other hand, however, cinema associated popularity with the presence of a communicative device capable of involving multitudes: by transforming this into a 'medial' and 'mass' popularity, cinema modernised it.

We have, accordingly, the popularization of modernity and the modernization of popularity. I would go on to suggest that if, in the first twenty years of its life, cinema has a strategic function, this consists in its very ability to recall these two terms and to redefine their reciprocity. The consequence of this move is important. What really qualifies early filmic experience is not the fact that it engages the gaze, but the fact that it offers a new range of sensations while also building a new type of collectivity. And, in parallel, what characterizes the nascent cinematographic spectator is not the fact that she/he is constituted as an observer, but the fact that her/his body engages in a richer sensibility and through this becomes more involved and engaged with others. Among the critics of the time, it is perhaps Ricciotto Canudo who best articulates this aspect of filmic experience. In his writing constant attention is paid to the ways in which cinema enables new forms of feeling and new social aggregates to be 'tried', and 'experimented' with, by the onlookers.[8] This new horizon of experience is not, however, expressed only in theoretical writing. A group of US films, from *Uncle Josh at the Moving Picture Show* (Edwin S. Porter, 1902) to *Mabel's Dramatic Career* (Mack

9 For a reconstruction of this regulatory process on the levels of morale, etiquette and hygiene in relation to Italy, see Francesco Casetti and Silvio Alovosio, 'Lo spettatore disciplinato: Regole di etichetta, di morale e di igiene nella fruizione filmica dei primi tempi', in *Storia del cinema Italiano*, Volume II (Venice: Marsilio, forthcoming). For an exemplary investigation into censorship, see Annette Kuhn, *Cinema, Censorship and Sexuality, 1909–1925* (London: Routledge, 1988). On the processes of early censorship in cinema, see Lee Grieveson, *Policing Cinema: Movies and Censorship in Early Twentieth-Century America* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004). On Hollywood's ability to accomplish a process of normalization of consumption, see Melvyn Stokes (ed.), *American Movie Audiences: from the Turn of the Century to the Early Sound Era* (London: British Film Institute, 1999); Richard Koszarski, *An Evening's Entertainment: the Age of the Silent Feature Picture, 1915–1928* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994).

10 Interestingly, Noël Burch names as an 'institutional form of representation' what others class as classic cinema, mainstream cinema or cinema of diegetic absorption.

11 Cf. P.M. Heu, *Le Temps du cinéma: Emile Vuillermoz père de la critique cinématographique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).

12 For interesting observations on this subject, see Janet Harbord, *Film Cultures* (London: Sage, 2002).

Sennett, 1913) or *A Movie Star* (Fred Hibbard, 1916), illustrates this same theme through small, exemplary tales. These films depict an audience that is systematically surprised and engaged by what appears on the screen and by what happens in the cinema.

Throughout the 1910s, and particularly after the end of World War I, we can progressively identify a 'regulation' that imposed itself on the forms of representation depicted, on the comportment expected of spectators, and on the very spaces cinema used. Cinema had to offer appropriate contents on the screen, it had to induce proper behaviour in the audience, and it had to guarantee environmental conditions that were not harmful to public health and safety. In sum, film had to answer to the canons of a morale, an etiquette and a hygiene.[9] Such 'regulation' conceals, however, a deeper process: cinema is 'institutionalized' – that is, it stabilizes its own ways of being and doing – and at the same time it becomes a 'social institution', in that it is now a coordinated complex of objects, behaviours and expectations.[10]

What is apparent here is a new strategic goal. After redesigning the meaning of modernity and popularity, filmic experience now has to prove that it is a 'good experience'. Going to the cinema, seeing a film, has to be a legitimate and legitimating act. The bitter division between 'cinephiles' and 'cinephobes' that marks the debate of the 1910s and 1920s (a good example is the quarrel between Paul Souday and Emile Vuillermoz in the columns of the French newspaper *Le Temps*[11]) clearly underlines this goal. Notwithstanding their divergent stances, both sides in fact draw an 'ideal' cinema. While for the one group film has not yet achieved this ideal and for the other it already offers good examples in this direction, the two sides nevertheless are in accord on an undertaking that can and must be realized.

Two observations may be added here. Firstly, the institutionalization of cinema is aided by an emerging need for narration and artistic expression. The first need is mainly expressed by a popular public, and is the grounds for the progressive rise of the full-length fiction film. The second need is expressed by an intellectual class, and is the grounds for the progressive 'sanctification' of cinematic work (this 'sanctification' began in the 1920s and culminated in the 1930s in the film exhibitions curated by Iris Barry at New York's Museum of Modern Art). The satisfaction of these two needs saw a 'standardization' of the filmic product, whilst it also credited cinema with the stigmata of 'quality'. Filmic experience becomes, accordingly, 'safe' and 'precious'.[12] Secondly, the institutionalization of cinema brings with it a sense of equilibrium between diverging forces. For instance, film viewing can maintain tracts of great intensity, and yet images and sounds do not overwhelm the spectator. In the same way, it drives the onlooker so that she/he is immersed in the representation onscreen, and yet it ensures safety margins, both mental and physical. Moreover, although cinema tends to depict the world in fragments it nevertheless preserves a sense of unity with regard to what is shown. And finally, while film viewing

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13 The characteristics of 'attendance' have been the subject of much discussion. The debate has been reconstructed in Janet Staiger, *Perverse Spectatorship: the Practices of Film Reception* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2000), pp. 11–27.

14 In particular, viewing environments are built to contain the crowd and at the same time to focus attention upon the screen. They also create echoes of the world represented in the film. On this theme, see Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film* (New York, NY: Verso, 2002).

15 I am referring, in particular, to the intervention of a 'film grammar' that smoothes over any distance between observer and observed. The writings of such theorists as Pudovkin, Arnheim or Spottiswoode contribute to this grammar. Vsevelod I. Pudovkin, *Film Technique: Five Essays and Two Addresses* (London: G. Newnes, 1933); Rudolf Arnheim, *Film* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933); Raymond Spottiswoode, *Grammar of the Film: an Analysis of Film Technique* (London: Faber and Faber, 1935).

16 On the concept of 'looking at' and 'looking through' in media, see David Bolter and Victor Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999).

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depends on a machine, a device, at the same time it favours a certain 'naturalness' in the subject's gaze. Through this series of 'compromises', filmic experience becomes at once more constant and more practicable. Modern and popular, it makes modernity and popularity more liveable.

A consequence of this process is that we can delineate a form of experience that might appropriately be called *attendance*.[13] Against the background of widespread regulation (both in terms of the viewing environment,[14] ways of viewing, and the object of vision itself[15]) what comes to light are three key elements.

Firstly, we have *experience of a place*, the theatre. It is a delimited place, but not closed. The theatre is not a retreat, like the home, nor it is an open world, like the metropolis. It instead forms something of a middle ground, where citizens converge and share the same emotional experiences. Looked at in this way, it provides a peculiar form of habitat: here one can be a mobile individual, a *flâneur*, and at the same time find a place of belonging. It is therefore a physical place, a little like the arcades or malls of the nineteenth century. And it is also a place permeated with a set of shared symbols which function, in a Heideggerian way, as language does for a community. Secondly, we have the *experience of a situation* that is both real and unreal. The spectator goes on living in an everyday universe, and at the same time also lives in an extraordinary universe. The first universe revolves around her/his encounter with other spectators, the second around her/his encounter with the film. Thus, what we find in cinema is an interface between two worlds, and it is here (also because of its profound regulation) that filmic experience manifests the character of a rite. Thirdly, we have the *experience of a diegetic world* which is made up of images (and sounds), but which can also have a consistence and depth of its own. Indeed, the spectator, viewing a film, sees pictures, but at the same time sees 'beyond' the pictures, to the reality that is represented.[16] This means that the spectator interprets filmic reality as something in which she/he might be immersed, thanks to a tight game of projection and identification with what appears onscreen. But the spectator also recognizes in these same images an exemplary portrait which can help her/him interpret the world in which she/he actually lives. Viewing then becomes an act that joins pleasure and productivity: the film stimulates and attracts, but also teaches and educates. The spectator consequently becomes a subject participating in a world that seems to offer itself as a gift, but is at the same time a subject that takes hold, on the cognitive level, of a world that can also function as prey.

There is, then, the experience of a place, the experience of a situation and the experience of a world. In *attendance*, the first two aspects converge towards the third: going to the cinema and joining other spectators activates a gaze (and also a capacity to listen) which allows the events recounted to be at once grasped and lived as an experience. What is important is that one exposes oneself to film, that one concentrates upon it and follows its unfolding. Moreover, what matters is filling one's

17 At the centre of attendance there is that 'to-be-looked-at-ness' which is examined by Laura Mulvey in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989). Under this aspect, the theory of 'subject position' of the 1970s and 1980s becomes a theory of attendance.

18 On the film, see Andrew Norton (ed.), *Buster Keaton's Sherlock Jr* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); in particular the essay by Henry Jenkins, '"This yellow Keaton seems to be the whole show": Buster Keaton, interrupted performance, and the vaudeville aesthetic', pp. 29–66.

19 Alexandre Astruc, 'Naissance d'une nouvelle avant-garde: la caméra-stylo', *Ecran Français*, no. 144 (1948).

eyes with a world made into a spectacle, which allows us to become privileged observers.[17] Perhaps the most efficient description of this form of experience is given not by a theoretical text, but by a film. This film – Buster Keaton's *Sherlock Jr* (USA, 1924) – is a work that is no less theoretical than other, written, texts.[18] In it, the main character, a projectionist, leaves the projection booth and penetrates the screen. Initially he finds himself confused by what he encounters: here we follow the trope of the early film spectator, who was surprised by the unpredictability of 'modern' experience. Keaton's character then, however, adapts to the world that the film discloses; he takes part in it, he accepts its lessons, and, back in the projection booth, he immediately applies to his own life what is represented on the screen. There is no better description available of the process I am trying to explain: in *attendance*, reality is available to be seen, and at the same time the spectator is ready to appropriate what she/he watches.

Nevertheless, the model of attendance has a sort of blind spot. The acquisition of the world on the screen almost hides two aspects. Firstly, this acquisition is made possible by the fact that the spectator inhabits space (the cinema) and participates in a collective rite (the vision). The risk is that she/he can master reality only by conforming with a residency and a collectivity. Secondly, this acquisition is accompanied by a strong sense of participation in what one observes: it is a matter less of 'grabbing hold' of things than of 'living' with them. The risk is that in taking hold of the world one cancels this availability and, with this, the possibility of a real 'opening'.

After World War II, the so-called 'modern cinema' highlights these two limits of attendance. What surfaces is a more ductile, articulated experience – one in which observer and observed no longer confront each other, but rather engage in a more subtle form of complicity. The emerging awareness of film as a political act (revived by Italian neorealism) and the emerging conception of film as an authorial and creative act (initiated by Alexandre Astruc[19] and subsequently taken up by the *nouvelles vagues*), constitute two important steps in this direction. In both instances, the spectator is no longer asked to 'attend' a show: she/he must instead 'respond' to the film and 'correspond' with its author. The viewer is asked to engage in a tight dialogue with what she/he has seen. Film has to be penetrated in order to be interpreted – what is at stake are both its open meaning and its masks. At the same time, the viewer is also asked to engage in a dialogue – direct or distant – with other spectators involved in the same task. Only an 'interpretive community' is capable of accessing filmic meaning as well as authorial thought.

Dialogue with the film and its author, in search of a meaning; dialogue with the other spectators, in search of a community: what comes to light is a situation in which the spectator loses her/his privileges and her/his exclusiveness as observer; she/he has to face – and to expose her/himself to – the world and the others. The effect is a profound

restructuring of spectatorial subjectivity (no more 'mastery', but remaining 'open' to things). But the effect is also an increasing role for film's perlocutionary effects, that is, its ability to do and make others do. The diffusion of 'cinephile' consumption, wonderfully parodied by Jean Luc Godard in *Masculin, Feminin* (1966), made this trend progressively evident.

From the 1980s onwards, change becomes even more apparent. New types of theatre are born, with specialized places such as the 'X-rated' cinema and the multiplex.[20] At the same time, alternatives to the traditional film theatre begin to emerge: television regularly shows films, and in some cases even acts as producer. Finally comes the development of the videotape – first Betamax, launched by Sony in 1975, and then VHS, which was to prove the successful format, launched by JVC the following year. A film could be recorded and rewatched in one's living room, but also bought in a shop in video format. What consequently emerge are, on the one hand, new forms of access to filmic experience and, on the other, new surroundings in which this experience might take place. New forms of access: to watch a film, one is no longer bound to a single ticket that allows entrance to a particular venue. One can instead pay by subscription to a public television service (or to a channel, or for a particular package); one can be at the same time a spectator of films and advertisements on commercial channels; and lastly, one can buy films on video. New surroundings: the living room, with its changed spatial structure, joins the film theatre. Cinema thus begins to disentangle itself from its exclusive medium (film–projector–screen) and from what has long been its privileged place (the film theatre).

In other words, filmic experience begins to *relocate*: it finds new media, new environments. This move is a decisive trait of cinema. It works on a deeper level than the re-mediation process to which cinema is also subjected.[21] In fact, thanks to the new physical supports, there is the emergence of new spatial systems and, along with these, new viewing conditions. These sites are arranged very differently from previous places: for instance, they retain features of the home environment. They are also sites that boast different types of technology: for instance, a small luminous screen rather than a large reflecting one. Furthermore, they are sites that are ready to join, and perhaps even to absorb, film consumption into the flow of daily life (watching a film in the living room alternates with other activities). Most importantly, film consumption is joined to other 'media' activities (watching a film takes place alongside using the phone, listening to the radio, reading the newspaper, and so on). It is this relocation that drives, and will continue to drive, the process of transformation of the experience of film.

But why is this a relocation? And what are its consequences? As I shall note, at the end of the 1990s the relocation of cinema would impetuously 'spread' to other media and other spatial situations. It would become possible to watch a film in places other than the domestic video: on

20 On the advent of multiplexes and new forms of viewing, see Barbara Klinger, *Beyond the Multiplex: Cinema, New Technologies and the Home* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006); Charles R. Acland, *Screen Traffic: Movies, Multiplexes and Global Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003). The relationship between digital technologies (particularly the internet) and spectatorial attitudes is examined in Michele White, *The Body and the Screen* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).

21 On remediation, see Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*.

computers, iPods, mobile phones; in waiting rooms, art galleries, on aeroplanes. In sum, films can be viewed on a number of platforms and in a number of situations. This occurs not only because of the pressure of the technological revolution, which facilitates a new diffusion of the cinema, but also because there is a new cultural scenario with which cinema must engage. This scenario is characterized by the emergence of two important needs. On the one hand, there is the need for *expressivity*: the identity of social subjects hinges increasingly upon the way they can put this into play. Cinema certainly presents an opportunity to attend a show, but it can only offer the possibility of becoming, at best, a virtual protagonist. Other media seem to do this better; cinema must update itself.[22] On the other hand, there is a need for *relationality*: social subjects are less and less part of preestablished social networks, and so they must build their own. Cinema traditionally provided a representation of the world and was engaged far less as a space of social exchange (the social encounter before and after the screening, virtual dialogue with the director, conversations in film societies, and so on). Other media responded far better to this need for exchange. If cinema wanted to retain its centrality as a medium it had, therefore, both to recuperate and to depend upon these same media.[23] The urge to face these two needs (for expressivity and for relationality), as well as the competition with other media, pushed cinema towards an exploration of new possibilities. If cinema relocates itself, it does so in response to this situation.

The conquest of new spaces and new platforms – starting with domestic space and the video recorder – progressively opens up new forms of filmic experience. I have already noted that filmic experience became increasingly quotidian as it became connected with other media. It may be added here that filmic experience becomes increasingly elective, born of specific choices, and no longer dependent upon habit. Hence, even though it lends itself to being repeated, filmic experience does so as a hobby rather than as a custom. Moreover, the experience of film is increasingly individual and inter-individual. The act of seeing brings the construction of small 'companies', both immediate and at a distance. Lastly, filmic experience becomes increasingly private: something to be had inside 'reserved' spaces (such as the home) or in isolation (and this even though the barriers around us have become glass walls). In short, filmic experience becomes more and more personalized. In turn, it also becomes increasingly active. The spectator has ceased simply to consume a show and begins to intervene in the act of consumption: she/he is asked not only to see, but also to do.[24] That is why this type of experience may be characterized as a *performance*.[25]

Performances with which the spectator is engaged are multiple, and these increase as the act of viewing a film finds new places and new ways to articulate itself. There is a cognitive 'doing' linked to the varying interpretations and different uses of film's symbolic resources.[26] To see a film is more and more about speaking it and recounting it.[27] There is an emotional 'doing', precisely because of the increasingly emotive

22 The quickest medium to answer to this need of expressivity is, perhaps, fashion: cinema can only provide symbolic identification; that is, purely abstract or psychological 'clothing'.

23 Television is better able to adapt to this growing need: from being a dispenser of programmes, it became in the 1980s a medium of contact with viewers, thanks to the opportunity that audience members had to phone in during shows and to have their calls broadcast live.

24 Régis Debray, examining the passage to the 'videosphere', talks about the 'end of the show', also linking it to a general weakening of the role of sight. See Debray, *Vie et mort de l'image: une histoire du regard en Occident* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), p. 228.

25 The word 'performance' is first used in Timothy Corrigan, *A Cinema Without Walls: Movies and Culture after Vietnam* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991). In the present essay the term has a more specific meaning.

26 In relation to this, see Maria Grazia Fanchi, *Spettatori* (Milano: Il Castoro, 2006).

27 From this point of view the consumption practices of fans are exemplary. On fandom, see Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992).

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28 On the emotional dimension, see Carl Plantinga and Greg M. Smith (eds), *Passionate Views* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); and from a different perspective, M. Brütsch et al. (eds), *Kinogefühle: Emotionalität und Film* (Marburg: Schüren, 2005).

29 On this type of doing, see Francesco Casetti and Maria Grazia Fanchi (eds), *Terre incognite* (Florence: Carocci, 2006).

elements connected to the act of viewing film.[28] Watching a film is more and more about putting oneself in the condition of being amazed and moved (perhaps also because of the presence of both 'special effects' and 'special affects'). There is also an increasingly practical 'doing' which is linked to the behaviours triggered by the process of consumption. One negotiates concrete spatiotemporal limits as well as the possible composition of the 'menu' of what one wishes to view.[29] Watching a film is more and more about organizing oneself for vision. But there is also a new relational 'doing', connected to the fact that one has to build a social network of sharing and exchange – and that this might also be undertaken virtually. At the same time, there is a new expressive 'doing', linked to the fact that viewing 'that' movie, in 'that' way is related to the construction of identity. Choosing a film is, increasingly, a declaration of belonging. Finally, there is a textual 'doing'. This is determined by the fact that the spectator increasingly possesses the chance to manipulate the text that she/he is consuming, not only by 'adjusting' viewing conditions (keeping or transforming the format, choosing high or low definition, and so on), but also by intervening in it (as with the clips, and the reedited and new soundtracks, on YouTube). Thus, filmic experience is a performance based on an act, rather than a moment of attendance. It places the individual, not the group, as its focus. It allows selected relationships, rather than generic gatherings. It develops abilities as well as interests. It entails a continuous handling, rather than an adaptation to preestablished situations. And, finally, filmic experience boasts liberatory values rather than the celebration of a discipline's glory. This, then, is how filmic experience adjusts and responds to the appeal of a new historical and cultural situation. It changes form in order to adapt to the times.

I have mentioned that since the end of the 1990s, cinema has been perfecting its relocation process. Film viewing takes place on single-screen theatres, in multiplexes, on the home television; but also on DVD, on home theatre systems, inside rail and underground stations, on buses, on aeroplanes, in art galleries, through one's computer, by surfing online, in virtual spaces such as YouTube or Second Life, through personal exchanges via the internet (peer-to-peer), on mobile phones. Cinema now disperses itself through social space and invades virtual space. And it multiplies its products: fiction films, documentaries, docudrama, final cuts, clips, reeditings, sound reeditings, narrations rendered from videogames. What emerges from all this is a multiplicity of *windows* which both open and frame our viewing experience. This enormous relocation of cinema, which relaunches and radicalizes a form of filmic experience based on performance, raises at least three issues.

Firstly, at a time when the spectator seems to become more 'active', what is really her/his degree of freedom? What of the 'disciplinary' bounds at stake in *attendance*: do they dissolve through performance or do they simply become new limitations? It is clear that through new

windows, subjects often 'invent' ways of building their 'own' experience. This invention can be seen as a negative act (when they give up the linear viewing of a film and simply linger on privileged clips), and as a positive spectatorial proactiveness (when they use home theatre systems to reintroduce a certain sacredness to the act of viewing). Such creativity is, however, ambiguous. It is often simply an execution of preestablished rules (DVDs allow – and actually anticipate – viewing 'in pieces'). Creativity is often also dictated by nostalgia (the 'sacred' value of viewing is no longer on the agenda). Further, creativity is more often invested in lateral activities than in film viewing proper (for instance, it manifests itself in blogs rather than in actual modes of consumption). In these cases, the freedom of the neo-spectator reveals its limits. It is more like choosing a game than the actual possibility of playing it. There can, however, be more dialectical moments in less regulated situations. From this point of view, the most interesting *windows* are not those linked to non-places (such as airports or buses) where filmic engagement is too contingent; nor are they those linked to artistic environments of particular interest (such as gallery installations), since here the spectator has no choice but to 'play by the rules' set by the artist. The most interesting windows are, rather, those which enable and facilitate peer-to-peer exchange, meaning that they introduce a viewing practice that extends into the rewriting of the text; and those linked to domestic space, where the creation of one's 'own' viewings calls for constant negotiation with other household members. In these cases, filmic experience illustrates how disciplinarity in contemporary society is less an application of previous rules and more a self-construction of contextual and contingent rules.

Secondly, inside these new windows are we still dealing with filmic experiences or are we instead dealing with more generic 'media' experiences? It is clear that cinema, in widening its definition, risks losing its specificity. At the same time as it relocates, its identity is subject to question. However, filmic experience remains specific in at least two, very different, cases. The first is where new technological platforms work simply as delivery tools: they create a cinematographic situation in so far as they offer a film. This is what happens when, for instance, we use our computer on a train to watch a DVD or a film we have downloaded: it is not the viewing environment that makes us film spectators, but simply the viewed object. The second case is where there is a readaptation of the environment: here the film's permanence is ensured by the fact that the conditions of film viewing are reinstated. This is what takes place in the living room when we turn off the lights, sit comfortably and watch a broadcast, following the old rituals of the theatre (even though we may be looking not at a film but at a television series, or even a football game). The characterization of a window as more or less 'cinematographic' occurs between these two poles.

But why, thirdly, should we even seek to preserve film experience? Should it not be consigned to the attic, so to speak, or to a museum? It is

clear that cinema is not a contemporary medium: it enjoys esteem, it continues to celebrate its most traditional rituals (after all, old cinemas with projectors and screens still exist); but it is not here that the spirit of the times treads. However, there is perhaps one thing that is still guaranteed in the permanence of the cinematographic within a vast mediascape: this is an aesthetic dimension, in the proper sense of the term, that can pit itself against an otherwise generalized and growing anaesthesia. Filmic experience, in fact, still presents itself as a moment which 'enlivens' our senses and nourishes sensibility. This is true, above all, of the cinematographic in its performative variant. Thanks to this, the spectator does not simply consume film but instead seizes control of her/his given situation. At the same time, she/he reflexively engages with the object of vision; she/he produces and articulates meaning. Performance accordingly helps us elude the 'channelling' of experience that modern media seem to pursue, introducing the possibility of a new experiential foundation.[30] After the redefinition of the modern and the popular, after the establishment of a legitimate and legitimating experience, after the opening of a more articulate dimension, it is the reaestheticization of communication that might mark the last strategic duty assigned to film. This is why I would argue that filmic experience will survive: in order to allow the spectator of media to be involved in a truly exploratory way, in order to force eyes and ears to be opened as they are nowhere else. In short, filmic experience still advocates not just the simple management of a 'bare life' but asks that the spectator give it meaning and sensibility.

Translation by Dafne Calgaro and Victoria Duckett

30 On this theme, see Pietro Montani, *Bioestetica* (Florence: Carrocci, 2007).

What are we expected to feel? Witness, textuality and the audiovisual

JOHN ELLIS

Digital technologies have laid bare the double nature of the photographic and recorded sound. Every time the 'record' button is pressed, a document is created. There is human intervention (someone presses a button), and a controllable technology creates an artefact, a document. Real events take place in front of the lens and the microphone; digital recorders create files that can be copied, dispatched around the world and extensively manipulated, subject only to the vagaries of software design and availability of internet access. From the outset, this is a doubly double process: it involves human activity and a technology in the creation of an artefact from real events.

Digital technology has altered the photographer's relationship with the recording device and the events being recorded. Gone is the eye jammed to the viewfinder, and with it the need for the special skill of the documentary cameraperson to keep 'the other eye open' to spot events developing beyond the edge of the frame. There is no need: the handheld camera can be held away from the body, already at a distance, already showing the finished electronic image. With digital stills, the arms-length camera has become the standard way of taking photos, at least amongst non-professional users, and it is ubiquitous with camcorder users. The live image is always already framed and screened on the digital viewfinder. The image-object, the document, is visible at the moment of its creation.

1 This is the case, in the 'amateur' arena – if that term can still be used – for recorded images but not for recorded sound. Most low-cost recording devices, from pro–am digital cameras to mobile phones, offer no facility to monitor or alter sound recording.

This has two important consequences. Firstly, photographers can have a more direct interaction with the event. They are able to make eye contact with their subjects and relate more fully; they can feel more a part of the event, being less dominated by the distancing effect of the camera apparatus. Secondly, the image of that event is present at the same time as the event itself: the profilmic event and its filmic representation coexist. With the ubiquity of digital photography and cinematography, this experience has become commonplace. People who consume recorded images now have experience of the process of producing them as well, if only for their own family use. We experience the images as 'like' the event, and can make them as 'like' it as possible since they can be adjusted after the event to emphasize their real-ness.[1] And yet in doing so we treat them also and immediately as objects; as documents in their own right. This now ordinary experience has changed the general cultural understanding of moving images. The true role of human agency in the processes of creating digital images has finally become apparent in those media cultures in which consumer digital photographic technologies are in widespread use.

We appreciate that recorded sound and image exhibit two features that seem contradictory. The photographic and the phonographic provide an immediate effect of 'thereness'. Yet equally they are experienced within an overarching appreciation that they are always and already textual. 'Thereness' is a felt effect, an almost involuntary response to seeing lifelike moving images with synchronized sound; and yet we know that these recordings have been willed into existence through human activity. They are textual: constructs that are the effect both of specific work and of preexistent forms.

The effect of the real strikes even the most cynical viewer immediately. Recorded or relayed images and sounds have an immediacy and a presence that cannot simply be denied. This immediacy still has the capacity to astonish and terrify (as the live television events of 9/11 in New York or 7/7 in London demonstrated). It equally underlies the most commonplace effects of direct address in television. Immediacy appears to be a potent effect of the photo- and the phono-graphic that remains despite all the obvious and calculated interventions from human and machine that bring it about. We see and we hear. These sensations feel similar to our seeing and hearing in everyday situations, even though at the same time we are perfectly aware that we are watching – because we have just changed channels, and know perfectly well that what we are perceiving comes in a convenient package. The audiovisual is at once textual and real. If this striking paradox did not exist, documentary would not be possible.

The paradox lies in the word 'screen' itself, as many writers have realized. A screen is a means of display but also of concealment. Behind the screen lie the mechanisms that bring you the pictures and the sounds, concealed by the very thing that they bring into existence. Fundamental to the design of film cameras and projectors is the shutter: the device that

conceals every second instant from the dispassionate gaze of the camera. Installed in projectors to reduce flicker, the shutter again conceals a fragment of an instant from the viewer. The paradoxical nature of the photographic was an insight gained through much reflection and theory. The widespread use of digital technology has made this an accessible insight. We know that any recording is at once real and textual: the two aspects are, to borrow Saussure's simile, like the two sides of a piece of paper.

The textual nature of the audiovisual causes many anxieties, which relate to the nature of human intervention into the technical processes of the audiovisual. Human intervention may harm the 'thereness' or evidential qualities of the recording. It implies 'manipulation', a term which is perhaps losing its negative connotations. Manipulation is expected nowadays: any self-respecting viewer will want documentary material that has undergone a process of proper textual construction. Anxieties arise when too much construction has taken place; that is, when the textual nature of the material has been exploited at the expense of the reality effect that it carries. The concern is that human intervention has been too great, to the extent that the evidential effect of the image has been compromised. It is a concern examined by Arild Fetveit and others in relation to digital photography.[2] It also lies behind Baudrillard's much-misquoted insight that 'the Gulf War did not take place',[3] insofar as it addresses the televisual coverage of the 1990 Gulf War. This, famously, was a war in which television cameras were kept well away from the action on the ground, to be replaced by imagery of remotely directed bombs silently destroying their targets. This imagery purported to show what it did not show: a war taking place in Kuwait and Iraq. Human agency was drained out of this material. There was no evidence of a cameraperson, let alone of any victims. It was all text, all construction and no reality effect. If a war was indeed taking place, then it seemed it was taking place away from the cameras operated by trained journalists. For the second Gulf War, a more sophisticated media strategy was adopted, one which ensured plenty of believable material from reporters on the ground.

The issue of believability and trust seems to be crucial in ensuring that acceptable or expected manipulation has taken place. The reality effect of audiovisual material remains striking, but it is also fragile. It crucially depends on known or assessable levels of human intervention, both in the making of the recording and in its subsequent incorporation into larger texts. Hence the importance of discussions about documentary material and how it is obtained, about the level of intervention by 'crew'[4] into the events being recorded. There is a growing sophistication within the documentary profession itself (in, for example, the BBC's Guidelines[5]); in the many books which have appeared about documentary (a genre which once seemed to present insuperable difficulties for analytic work); and in a demonstrably greater sophistication on the part of the viewing public (as documented by Annette Hill and others[6]). Sometimes all three

2 Arild Fetveit 'Reality TV in the digital era: a paradox in visual culture?', *Media, Culture and Society*, vol. 21, no. 6 (1999), pp. 787–804.

3 Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995).

4 This term is becoming a standard one for 'anyone involved in location work', and includes director, producer, and so on.

5 These are constantly updated at http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/

6 Annette Hill, *Reality TV: Audiences and Popular Factual Television* (London: Routledge, 2005).

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7 John Ellis, 'Documentary and truth on television: the crisis of 1999', in John Corner and Alan Rosenthal (eds), *New Challenges for Documentary* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 342–60.

currents come together in press-led controversies about the ethical status of particular documentaries.[7]

The unacceptable editing of material can have drastic consequences. The controller of BBC1, Peter Fincham, resigned in 2007 because of an editing continuity error in material that was not even broadcast. At the launch of the autumn schedule, he presented a trailer for a forthcoming prestige series *A Year with the Queen*. The trailer seemed to show the Queen storming out of a photoshoot with Annie Leibovitz. In fact, the footage was edited in an incorrect order. Footage which captured the Queen's grumbling on the way into the session about the uncomfortable nature of her ceremonial robes was transmuted into a complaint about the photographer. In a satirical context such editing would be acceptable. But in a factual context it clearly breached expectations about the proper use of material. In addition to Fincham's departure, the executive producer Stephen Lambert resigned from the production company RDF. RDF had several big contracts cancelled by the BBC and other broadcasters. The BBC took direct control of the programmes and reedited them as *Monarchy: The Royal Family at Work* (BBC1, 2008). 'Trust' in television was deemed to have suffered a serious blow as 'standards' seemed to have slipped.[8]

8 See, for example: *Broadcast*, 8 November 2007 (Editorial); 30 August 2007 (Edinburgh TV Festival report); 3 January 2008 ('Integrity crucial to regain trust').

The standards concerned are those of acceptable human intervention into the material that is recorded by digital technologies; of the acceptable textual work that can take place to enhance and render intelligible material that carries a sense of 'thereness'. Digital technologies have not only made the collection of such recordings easier, they also depend on human agency to guarantee their effectivity and meaning. In the area of moving image and sound, easy digital technology has had the paradoxical effect of making human agency a crucial part of the process. It has freed the photographer from the limitations of the viewfinder, enabling greater participation in the photographed event. It has also made crucial the need for a 'chain of guarantee' of the reality of these recordings, to ensure that their textual aspect has not overwhelmed their witnessing aspect. This chain of guarantee is often assured by an institution which sets standards and oversees the entire production process. Hence the digital makes public service broadcasting a desirable feature of the new landscape of digital television. It enables institutions to exist that can guarantee this chain of trust in edited material.[9] The digital has made necessary an enhanced understanding of the role of human agency in the creation of moving image material, and of the need for a moral agency which brings specific values to bear. The mechanical process of recording is on its own no longer sufficient guarantee of the reality effect of the recorded material. Equally, it has brought forward the need for an understanding of the moral agency involved in the viewing of audiovisual material.

9 John Ellis, *TV FAQ* (London: IB Tauris, 2007), pp. 27–33, 187–91.

The reality effect of moving images and sounds invokes many of the emotions that we experience during direct encounters in our lived spaces. The textual nature of moving images and sounds profoundly alters these

emotions. The people and events, utterances and appearances, that we meet in the audiovisual realm feel similar to direct encounters, even as we know them to be distanced and observed encounters. We enjoy this distance, offering as it does a mobility of gaze that we could not have in the real. We witness events in the audiovisual from many points of view. This is the wonder of editing in fictional texts and, in factual material, of the compilation of news and documentary material from many different sources. This mobility of vision enables our activity of witnessing, but at the cost of being unable to intervene. We can *feel*, but always already within a structure that gives both more and less than we would gain from a real encounter.[10]

Any material that claims a documentary status involves its viewers in two conjoined activities: that of witness and that of being addressed. The relation of witness is underwritten by a belief that relatively explicit values of trust have guided all human interventions in the rendering of that material into a text. All of these interventions have constructed an address to the witnessing viewer. This address does more than simply say 'these things happened (or are happening)'; it is an address to the witnessing viewer as a moral agent. Hence it is legitimate to ask of this address: 'what are we expected to feel?'

In many discussions of the concept of witness, the consideration of the feelings provoked by the activity is effectively collapsed into a narrow range: witness implies witness of suffering.[11] The discussion is then drawn into the terrain of Hannah Arendt's distinction between compassion and pity, and Luc Boltanski's consideration of the nature of distant suffering. The distant yet compelling witness of suffering that has been enabled by the audiovisual is certainly one of the more pressing concerns of our time. Everyone has their own private list of horrors from the past few years witnessed on television, whether they be traffic accidents or 9/11, mass famine or attempted genocide, images of torture or of inconsolable grief. The feelings that these encounters have provoked – and, for many, continue to provoke – receive an uncertain reply from much audiovisual theory. There are many good reasons why this is so. Many theorists are reluctant to endorse a desire to protect children that seems to slide into calls for censorship; the criticism that suffering is cheapened by its audiovisual transmission to remote people and places seems to deny both the power of the media and the sincerity of the feelings which are sometimes (but not always) provoked. Nevertheless, audiovisual theory has to address these issues directly.

My current concern is to stress that the witness of distant suffering is not qualitatively different from a more general form of witness that underpins the audiovisual. It shocks and appals; we would rather not look at the images or listen to the accounts. But it is not different in status from witnessing more mundane or less disturbing events. Indeed, the witness of distant suffering depends for its efficacy on what we witness in much more mundane audiovisual encounters. Everyday mundane witness underpins the exceptional moments of audiovisual shock: the first

10 For a fuller exploration of this argument, see John Ellis, 'Mundane witness', in Paul Frosh and Amit Pinchevski (eds), *Media Witnessing: Testimony in the Age of Mass Communication* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

11 My first use of this concept in *Seeing Things* (London: IB Tauris, 2000) tends to follow this line as well, as does John Durham Peters's critique and, to some degree, Paul Frosh's further elucidation in Frosh and Pinchevski (eds), *Media Witnessing*.

12 See Annette Hill, *Reality TV*; and *Restyling Factual TV* (London: Routlege, 2007).

13 Helen Wood, 'Texting the subject: women, television and self-reflexivity', *The Communication Review*, vol. 8, no. 2 (2005), pp. 115–35.

14 Martin L. Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development: Implications for Caring and Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 4.

15 See Suzanne Keen, *Empathy and the Novel* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007).

16 Duan Changming and Clara E. Hill, 'The current state of empathy research', *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, vol. 43, no. 3 (1996), pp. 261–74.

17 Some of Helen Wood's reported exchanges show a similar process at work.

18 Stephanie D. Preston and Frans B.M. de Waal, 'Empathy: its ultimate and proximate bases', *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, vol. 25, no. 1 (2002), pp. 1–72.

19 Ibid., p.1.

20 Feelings of empathy would possibly lead one to wish that these experiments had never been undertaken.

encounter with images from Abu Ghraib, footage of starvation in Africa or of police brutality closer to home. I wish to argue that there exists a continuum between a mundane sofa interview on a light topic on breakfast television and massacre footage. In each case the footage is interrogated in almost the same instant as it is felt. Its textual nature is probed for proof of its authenticity and for explanations (or at least context) for the witnessed events that evoke emotions. Annette Hill's research on audience responses at the turn of the millennium has shown how sophisticated, even forensic, ordinary viewers now are.[12] Helen Wood's work has examined the dialogic interplay that viewers have with daytime talk shows.[13] Both these pioneering pieces of empirical research tend to support the thesis that televisual witness involves a complex to and fro between seeing, believing and feeling among today's active viewers. The compassion and pity experienced, most of the time, on witnessing traumatic footage should therefore be considered as subsets of a more general emotional process: the process of empathy.

Empathy is a relatively new word, entering the language at the beginning of the twentieth century. It seeks to designate the ability to experience the emotions of others as one's own, of feeling as an other does. As a term, it seems to be used in ways that assume that a 'proper distance' is maintained, that feeling *as* an other does is not to imply some merging *with* that other. The self is maintained even as the other is experienced. In Martin Hoffman's definition, empathy is 'an affective response more appropriate to another's situation than one's own'.[14] The term emerged in experimental psychology and aesthetics more or less simultaneously.[15] It has proved to be particularly valuable as a description of the psychotherapeutic process, and yet has, by its very usefulness, become somewhat diffuse in meaning. A recent review of the literature in the field, whilst seeking to discern empirical tests of the process in the therapeutic setting, usefully proposes 'that researchers use *intellectual empathy* to refer to the cognitive process and *empathic emotions* to refer to the affective aspect of empathic experience'.[16] This implies that empathy be seen both as an immediate 'involuntary' response and as a process that involves reflection or a considered projection of self into the place of another. Empathy is therefore potentially a process with several stages, particularly in the sustained process of psychotherapy.[17] Empathy involves 'response with the object (matching responses as with distress to distress or joy to joy), and response to the object (instrumental responses as with consolation to distress or fear to anger)'.[18] Stephanie Preston and Frans de Waal go so far as to propose a concept of empathy in which 'individuals of many species are distressed by the distress of a conspecific and will act to terminate the object's distress, even incurring risk to themselves'.[19] They propose this nonhuman-specific concept on the basis of reports of some disturbing experiments on rhesus monkeys and rats.[20]

Empathy designates the process by which emotions are experienced as the result of an encounter with an other, whether immediate or through

the distanced audiovisual process of witness. The emotions are provoked by the perceived experience and the perceived feelings of the other. It therefore implies that the other must be recognized as having a similar (if not identical) status as that which witnesses attribute to themselves. Witnesses have to recognize the other as being like themselves if they are to experience empathic emotions. Hence there is no real empathy with the many incidental victims of an action movie. The genre has an implicit assumption that there are three classes of individuals: characters who are, or seem to be, good; characters who are evil; the hapless drones who carry out the intents of the evil characters. These drones are attributed no personhood. They exist in relation to plot and to the gleeful celebration of destruction that is the particular pleasure of the genre. When the personhood of the other is recognized by the person who witnesses, then empathy follows. This empathy can be intellectual or emotional, or a combination of the two. Personhood is socially attributed: the long struggle to recognize slaves as full persons being a case in point.

Empathy requires that the witness acknowledge the status of the other as a person. Arguably, the rapid development of the audiovisual has contributed, through its ability to present the distant as a simulation of presence, to a wider acceptance of the personhood of remote and different others. It has enabled, and perhaps even required, a recognition of common personhood across the many evident differences in the human race. A more complicated process is yet to come: the attribution of elements of personhood to beings other than humans. Some indications of this process can already be seen. The revulsion at the testing of human concepts and process on animals (as we might feel at the experiments reported by Preston and de Waal) is one such indication. As this process develops, the notion of 'personhood' itself will change. A more ecological personhood would recognize the status of humans as a part of nature, as having natural processes as a constituent part of their personhood rather than as a repressed other to that personhood. Hence the extension of personhood to the higher primates might well result. It should be recognized that personhood is a socially malleable conception. So too is empathy, which depends on the attribution of personhood to the other in order to be able to feel from their position.

If empathy can be used to designate the feelings that are provoked by distant events witnessed through the audiovisual, then what of the textual structure through which they are provoked? Structures of expectation attach to any audiovisual experience, however short in duration or trivial in content. Just like a feature film or a news bulletin, a modest clip on YouTube brings with it a weight of contextual expectations. We are addressed by the texts that we witness: they are made for us by agencies which have their communicative intents. We come to them voluntarily, expecting to receive, notwithstanding all the intellectual reservations that we might have about the word, some kind of communication. Any audiovisual text comes with a dense set of expectations and promises. Any audiovisual text equally, through its mobility of vision, will provide

the witnessing individual with multiple instances of address, of instances of attempted communication.

Take, for instance, a simple interview: say, Martin Bashir interviewing Diana, Princess of Wales (*Panorama*, BBC1, tx 20 November 1995). It will involve us, through empathy, with the evident distress of the Princess. But any interview involves a further series of communicative acts which complicate this empathy. The Princess herself has reasons for giving the interview (or submitting to it; both terms, significantly, are in common use). Even as we empathize, we are aware of the calculation behind her statements. Bashir adds another layer of intentionality. This is an exchange, rather than the Princess 'just talking'. It has its own rules, one of which is the interviewer's search for some kind of truth. The institution of the BBC, broadcasting the interview, brings its own reputation into play as a series of implied, framing statements. The placing of the interview within the BBC and its flagship documentary news programme *Panorama* means that this exchange is both important and trustworthy. In addition, this being the medium of broadcasting, we are aware that this whole textual assemblage is not addressed to us specifically but, as Paddy Scannell puts it so felicitously, to 'anyone as someone'.[21] So we are aware of the general address of what we are seeing, and can be curious and perhaps even concerned about the reactions of others. A sense of what others might say or do also bears down on such exchanges. This being the case, what are we meant to feel?

We witness through a series of communicative attempts. Diana, Bashir, *Panorama*, the BBC and virtual others within the exchange are all involved in a process through which they attempt to communicate. Just because Diana says something, it does not mean that she succeeds at any level in either communicating facts, conveying a perspective or generating an empathic response. The same goes for every single one of the participants, real or virtual. It is important to realize that, through the audiovisual, we are witnessing attempts at communication rather than experiencing communication. Communicative attempts are never transparent. They come from someone and somewhere. They encounter witnesses who are also located in other spaces and times. So their reception is uncertain, equivocal and not univocal. Aspects of these communicative attempts may work, others may not. This will tend to be different even at an individual level, although generalizations can be made.

The distinction between intellectual empathy and empathetic emotions, however provisional, seems to be useful in clarifying the conflicting and intermingling feelings which are provoked. In the Bashir interview, direct empathic emotions are felt in response to the Princess with her heavily mascara'd eyes, her awkward posture and hesitant speech. These feelings tend to be intensified by the nature of the dialogue with Bashir, his gentle questioning within an ambiguous mise-en-scene that is both domestic and official. An intellectual empathy partially conflicts with these emotions. That same unusually heavy mascara may

lead us to suspect the Princess's motives of being more calculating and less a direct expression of her distress. But above all, intellectual empathy is an empathy with the virtual others in this exchange. These virtual others include those whom the interlocutors (the Princess and Bashir) are discussing. What will they feel about what she is saying about her crowded marriage with Prince Charles, and how will they react? What will be the reactions of those many, nameless yet somehow known, others who are presumed to be watching at the same time?

These conjoined empathies set up something of a conflict, but a productive conflict. This conflict is essentially one of emotional ambiguity, of knowing *what* you feel yet at the same time not knowing quite *how* to feel. This emotional ambiguity is underpinned by the constitutive ambiguity of the audiovisual, its status as there-ness yet textuality. This emotional ambiguity is of course resolved, but outside the text. We think about it, talk about it, come to a conclusion of some kind, or dismiss the whole thing as a passing show of no great consequence. The extratextual resolves the ambiguity of the textual, as empirical researchers are beginning to understand by looking at conversations with and around television material which take place as programmes unroll, as well as after watching. This emotional ambiguity is also the production, within the text itself, of the 'proper distance' called for by Roger Silverstone.

In his last book, Silverstone tends to examine the text as text rather than as an alliance of 'thereness' and textuality that gives rise to a complexity of reactions. He is therefore forced into the uncharacteristically pessimistic view that 'proper distance' is not currently achieved in broadcasting.[22] Instead he finds 'a kind of polarisation in the determinations of distance'. He goes on:

> On the one hand we find ourselves being positioned by media representations as so removed from the lives and worlds of other people that they seem beyond the pale, beyond reach of care of compassion and certainly beyond reach of any meaningful or productive action. ... *Per contra* the representation, just as frequent and just as familiar, of the other as being just like us, as recoupable without disturbance in our own world and values has, though perhaps more benignly, the same consequence. We refuse to recognise not only that others are not like us, but that they cannot be made to be like us. ... Such cultural neo-imperialism represents the other side of the immorality of distance, in its refusal to accept difference, in its resistance to recognizing and to valuing the stranger.[23]

Both responses may well be felt, but as a stage in a larger process of negotiating empathic responses and working through the many forms of address that compose a contemporary audiovisual text. Both responses imply an exaggeratedly high degree of emotional selectivity when witnessing events through an audiovisual text. There is quite literally a world of difference between recognizing individuals as 'just like us'

22 Roger Silverstone, *Media and Morality: on the Rise of the Mediapolis* (London: Polity Press, 2007).

23 Ibid., pp. 172–3.

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rather than just 'like us'. To witness distant individuals and to recognize them as persons is inevitably to see them as 'like us'. Yet this recognition involves both sameness and distance, the imaginative attempt to feel what they are feeling and the simultaneous knowledge that they are them and we are us. The position from which we witness is a mobile one, involving twists and turns of emotional empathy rather than one fixed position of identification or rejection. We see not only those whom we might construe as 'just like us' but others as well, in the same scene or in the next shot; others who may be more or less sympathetic, more or less authoritative, more or less persuasive, more or less in accordance with one or more of our fantasy selves. The textual construction of witness offers differing points of view, positioning us at once with the individuals whom we witness, the concrete others who are also interviewed or seen in the same reports or documentaries, and with the virtual others (both people and institutions) who are also involved in the exchange.

This is clear enough in many mundane encounters through the audiovisual media. Many exchanges are ritualized so that the disposition of different empathies is relatively clear. Ritualization underlies, for example, the complex structuring of the daytime talk text.[24] The twists and turns of emotions are the stuff of audiovisual witnessing, practised and enjoyed every day, and deployed only seldom in relation to traumatic factual footage. However, another area of the audiovisual exposes viewers to trauma more regularly: the area of audiovisual fiction. Empathy is more often discussed in relation to fiction, and it may be that many of the structures of empathy in relation to factual audiovisual material are learned and refreshed through fiction. However, fiction is explicitly textual; its texts come with no guarantee of 'thereness', but rather with a confident assertion of controlling human agency in all its aspects. Fiction is less capable, therefore, of generalizing. Footage that documents, constructed into a text that attests to a more general state of affairs, is more able to mobilize empathic feelings at a proper distance.

A portrait of the twenty-first century

MARTINE BEUGNET and ELIZABETH EZRA

For spectators who allow themselves to be immersed in the enthralling audiovisual field created in Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno's film *Zidane*, the experience suggests that what they have seen is a key work of the new century. Indeed, the film may well be presented as the portrait of a star football player, but its impact and significance extend well beyond, and will outlive, that of a conventional documentary about a now retired athlete. *Zidane: un portrait du 21e siècle/Zidane: a 21st Century Portrait* (2006) offers itself simultaneously as a highly sensual and deeply reflexive work, combining the visceral and moving power of the audiovisual spectacle with an exploration of the status of filmic images as historical objects embedded in a culture of mass consumerism. As such, the film exemplifies one of the most stimulating developments in both contemporary film theory and the practice of feature filmmaking: the return of the corporeal and a concomitant reappraisal of film theory's abstract tendencies through a renewed focus on the material appearance and sensory impact of film and media images and sounds.

Since the 1970s, abstract models, often borrowed from established theoretical schools (linguistic, semiotic and psychoanalytic models in particular), and complemented over time by approaches informed by socioeconomic and cultural studies, have dominated film theory. In the past decade, however, approaches of a more phenomenological nature have reemerged in the work of both filmmakers and film theorists, focusing anew on the perception and materiality of the film medium as well as on its sensory and emotional impact.[1] Gordon and Parreno's film is an emblematic instance of the intersection of these apparently antithetical fields. With its fluctuations between macroscopic and

1   Martine Beugnet, *Cinema and Sensation: French Film and the Art of Transgression* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press: 2007), pp. 8–10. See also Nicole Brenez, *De la figure en général et du corps en particulier: L'Invention figurative au cinema* (Paris: De Boeck and Larcier, 1998); Jérôme Game, 'Cinematic bodies: the blind spot in contemporary French theory on corporeal cinema', *Studies in French Cinema*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2001), pp. 47–53.

microscopic planes of perception, the film opens itself to a variety of spectatorial experiences and a multitude of readings. Neither straightforward documentary nor conventionally filmed portrait, *Zidane* is an audiovisual poem and a study of portraiture in movement and duration situated between the experimental (in its exploration of film form and time as duration) and the popular (in its presentation of a sporting hero playing in a high-profile football match). It also presents itself as a complex exploration of our experience of subjective and collective memory in an era of reified images and mass communication. The work's hybrid nature extends to its double vocation as feature film and gallery work, and its capacity to evoke and elicit a range of modes of spectatorship, from that of the football stadium to that of the cinema, museum or art gallery.

Known for their interdisciplinary work using a variety of materials, multimedia artists Gordon and Parreno found inspiration for the *Zidane* project in their respective experiences of growing up with football in a world increasingly shaped by television. Traces of the filmmakers' experience emerge through Zidane's own childhood account – provided via intertitles – of watching football on television and of the fascination and physical pull these images and sounds exercised on him: as a young boy, whenever he heard the distinctive voice of the main French football commentator of the time, Zidane would draw close to the television set. With its highly sensuous celebration of the collective and ubiquitous power of the media, *Zidane* combines a lyricism and technophilia reminiscent of Dziga Vertov with a characteristically contemporary melancholy tone, embracing cutting-edge technology to explore the present-day import of a genre – portraiture – that is rooted in the era of the 'auratic' work of art. The result is a deeply affecting evocation of the twenty-first century's media-saturated world.[2] In the way it alternately embraces and distances itself from the commodified sphere of global communications, Gordon and Parreno's film sounds a distant echo of the seminal reflections on cinema and new technologies led by the thinkers of the Frankfurt School, notably Walter Benjamin. While mourning the decline of the artistic aura's aesthetic of distance inherent in film's status as a mechanically reproduced commodity, Benjamin celebrated cinema's transformative capacity to 'shock' the masses into a visceral revolutionary consciousness, and acknowledged cinema's potential role in the reclamation and reenchantment of ordinary reality.[3]

In 1971, Hellmuth Costard completed *Fussball wie noch nie*, a portrait of George Best composed of a montage of sequences captured on 16 mm film by eight cameras pointed solely at one player throughout a single match. A comparison with *Zidane* is revealing. Costard's film, in its spare, unglamorous approach (the crowd as well as the other players are mostly excluded from the frame, and there is no play on the material appearance of the image) remains a fascinating exposition of the thinness of reality mediated through filmed images. In contrast, Gordon and Parreno's work is an experiment in the redemptive capacity of images to

2 Beugnet, *Cinema and Sensation*, pp. 170–76.

3 On Benjamin's notion of cinema as reenchantment and reclamation of 'experience' in a commodified world, see Bill Schwartz, 'Media times/historical times', *Screen*, vol. 45, no. 2 (2004), p. 95; Miriam Hansen, 'Benjamin, cinema and experience: "The blue flower in the land of technology"', *New German Critique*, no. 40 (1987), pp. 179–224.

4   As Cyril Neyrat writes, as
    exemplified in the artists' 'anti-
    spectacular ethic', the deployment
    of such an apparatus cannot be
    dismissed as mere technology
    fetishism. See 'The daydreaming
    of a loner', *Cahiers du cinéma*,
    English version, no. 638 (2008),
    www.cahiersducinema.com/
    article804.html [accessed 20
    September 2008].

salvage fragments of a collective memory and infuse it with a renewed sense of density and meaning. To this end, they have relied on the resources of modern-day technology and the breadth of possibilities that such technology affords artists and film directors concerned with the development of poetic forms of modern audiovisual expression.[4]

The premiss of the project and the apparatus deployed by the two artists are well documented. Gordon and Parreno brought together a team of internationally renowned camera and sound professionals to operate the microphones and the seventeen cameras installed around the field – a combination of High Definition with 35 mm Scope format, and two prototype cameras with extremely powerful telelenses. The work's overall timeframe is that of a match: the raw footage was shot between kickoff and the closing whistle of a Spanish league game between Villarreal and Real Madrid on 23 April 2005; and the final, edited theatrical version accordingly lasts about ninety minutes. And yet the film has little to do with the usual football broadcast. *Zidane* incorporates a variety of audiovisual matter – images and sounds recorded directly on the football pitch and from television screens as well as satellite images and, at half-time, a series of extracts from broadcast news. Hence, the film effects sudden changes of scale and of medium, occasionally cutting from a close view of the action to a light-saturated, bird's-eye view of the pitch, or switching to conventional broadcast images of the match.

The bulk of the film, however, is composed of the footage shot on the pitch by the seventeen cameras focused solely on one figure, the great footballer Zinédine Zidane. The result is an elaborate series of striking closeup shots and fluid pans from varying angles that shift in and out of focus, edited together to create an entrancing, balletic composition of movements, colour fields and textures. The familiar linear narrative offered in traditional broadcasts is thus abandoned, the initial audiovisual rendition of the match's temporal frame redeployed, unfolded as it were, to form a kind of spatiotemporal sculpture – an ensemble of fluid blocks of duration brought together through intricate editing.

5   Ibid., p. 2. Gordon and Parreno
    took the technical team to the
    Prado to look at paintings by
    Velasquez and Goya.

6   Recalling Gilles Deleuze's use of
    the term, Laura Marks describes
    haptic visuality as 'a kind of seeing
    that uses the eye like an organ of
    touch'. Marks, 'Haptic visuality:
    touching with the eyes',
    *Framework: the Finnish Art
    Review*, no. 2 (2004), http://
    www.framework.fi/2_2004/
    visitor/artikkelit/marks2.html
    [accessed 3 October 2008].

It is to painting that Cyril Neyrat compares the film's layers of images, describing them in terms of brushstrokes.[5] Indeed, the overall effect of the film is that of a formidable exercise in haptic visuality.[6] Its visual field is in constant flux, shifting between long shots in clear-cut and detail-saturated photography to images caught by the telelenses, where forefront and background alternate between precision and shallowness, to extreme closeups that sometimes give way to complete abstraction. The soundtrack operates similar variations, overlapping or contrasting the elegiac, mournful tones of Glasgow-based band Mogwai, 'closeup' sounds of Zidane's actions, the drone of the crowd, and the voice of the Spanish television commentator. The film thus switches from one form of hapticity to another: from low resolution and grainy appearance to fine texture and photographic exactitude; from wistful musical tune to the precise enunciation of a television commentator to the pounding noise of the multitude. In the opening credit sequence, for instance, the camera

draws so close to the screen of a television showing a broadcast of the match that the image turns into an abstract composition, a shimmering surface of interwoven, colourful threads, before it abruptly cuts to a high-definition image of the pitch. From the very beginning, the film thus discourages an omniscient, masterly mode of viewing, calling instead for a 'tactile' relation to the image, an identification with the changing appearance of the audiovisual field as much as with its figurative content.

Although some images are superimposed with fragments of written texts – elusive observations originating, presumably, from the player – the film as a whole provides no factual information about Zidane. Yet Gordon and Parreno's extensive use of the telelens in particular creates an uncanny sense of physical intimacy with the star player. The eye of the camera zooms repeatedly on the player's face, hands and feet, capturing otherwise unnoticed details, odd gestures (such as the way he grazes the ground with the tip of his shoes) and facial expressions. Auditory details elicit a similar sense of closeness and poignancy, contrasting the overwhelming roar of the crowd with the sound of Zidane's breathing, his occasional grunts and sighs. As the art historians Michael Fried and Tim Griffin put it in their analysis of the film in *ArtForum*, 'The overall effect of subtitles, sound track, and images is intensely "subjective" and underscores the already powerful impression of Zidane's capacity for stillness – one might almost say the impression of his psychic apartness, his faithfulness to his own Achilles-like singularity – at the heart of the general combat'.[7] Hence if the telelens erases spatial distance and absorbs the background into its shallow depth of field, the player's portrait nonetheless yields the sense of unattainability characteristic of the auratic. With such a closed and exclusive focus on one individual, the viewing of the film should amount to a frustrating and claustrophobic experience. Yet, on the contrary, *Zidane* is a perception-expanding event where the outer field, though mostly *unseen*, is always *sensed*, and where identities, individual and collective, appear in a state of flux. Gordon and Parreno's work is, fundamentally, about interconnectedness – with the world as well as with other subjects – and about cinema's ability to recreate such a sense of interconnectedness. In Deleuzian terms *Zidane*, as a study of the fluidity of identity, is a film of multiple 'becomings'. Equally, in its vivid evocation of how embodied subjectivities and the objective world are 'passionately intertwined',[8] it recalls the oceanic feeling described by Freud, or Merleau-Ponty's description of the world as flesh: that is, as the unsettling and exhilarating experience of the lack of distinction between inside and outside, oneself and others.[9]

Many commentators have been struck by the player's capacity for total concentration, or absorption in the task at hand, under the watchful gaze of the ecstatic stadium crowd and the multiple cameras – and in full knowledge that his performance is being observed by millions on the day via a live broadcast and then scrutinized by millions of viewers of the film, for which his full compliance was crucial. According to Fried and Griffin, 'the film lays bare a hitherto unthematized relationship between

7   Michael Fried and Tim Griffin, 'Absorbed in the action', *ArtForum*, vol. 45, no. 1 (2006), pp. 333–5, p. 335.

8   Vivian Sobchack, *The Address of the Eye: a Phenomenology of Film Experience* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 286.

9   Sigmund Freud, 'Civilization and its discontents' (1929), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works, Volume XXI*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), pp. 57–145; Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), p. 138.

10 Fried and Griffin, 'Absorbed in the action', p. 334. This apparent awareness of the act of looking, which Fried elsewhere calls 'theatricality', is characteristic of much postmodern art, with its often gimmicky self-reflexivity. Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980). See also Richard Rushton, 'Deleuzian spectatorship', in this issue.

11 Marks, 'Haptic visuality'.

12 Ibid.

13 Catherine Fowler, 'Room for experiment: gallery films and vertical time from Maya Deren to Eija Liisa Ahtila', *Screen*, vol. 45, no. 4 (2004), p. 343.

All images from *Zidane: un portrait du 21e siècle/Zidane: a 21st Century Portrait* (Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno, 2006), courtesy of Artificial Eye.

absorption and beholding – more precisely, between the persuasive representation of absorption and the apparent consciousness of being beheld – in the context of art, a relationship that is no longer simply one of opposition or complementarity but that allows a sliding and indeed an overlap'.[10] Paradoxically, however, this palpable sense of the player's unwavering concentration and focus, rather than creating a feeling of self-containment, contributes to make the presence of the outer field tangible: that which is partly or wholly excluded from the frame – the other players, the football pitch as a whole – is relayed by the soundtrack as well as by the player's intense awareness of the match around him. Moreover, the multisensorial response elicited by the tactile, synaesthetic quality of the images and sounds invites an embodied relation to the film where the sense of connection with the player and his surroundings is emphasized: we hear Zidane's breath and our own breath quickens; we see and hear Zidane's toe digging into the ground and we feel the grass beneath our feet; we see the sweat trickling down Zidane's face, and we wipe our brow. Even beyond these moments of sensory identification, there is the pervasive sense of being swept up in the film's *texture*, of merging with images we cannot yet, or can no longer, make out. Gordon and Parreno's use of haptic images 'invites a kind of identification in which there is a mutual dissolving of viewer and viewed, subject and object; where looking is not about power but about yielding'.[11] It is precisely the function of haptic images, Laura Marks argues, to 'help us feel the connectivity between ourselves, the image and its material support, and the world to which the image connects us'.[12]

According to Catherine Fowler, it is in the context of a gallery viewing that we are most likely to experience this sense of connectivity to the fullest. In gallery films, she writes, 'the moving image expands to fill space and time, inviting responses from its spectators that are very far from the passive, distanced stance of the auditorium. . . . [Gallery films also invoke] a connection to the space outside the frame that forces us to read in a more involved, embodied way.'[13] Fowler's characterization of

cinema spectatorship (in 'the auditorium') as strictly 'passive' and 'distanced' overlooks the sophistication of many modes of cinematic engagement; but more specifically, in the case of Gordon and Parreno's film, the experience of watching a match is perhaps more successfully evoked through cinema's continuous, collective screening than in the more fragmented and private mode of viewing of the gallery. The contrast is significant in that the spectator's 'involved, embodied' relation to the film mirrors the film's formal treatment of the relationship between player and crowd, figure and ground. The effect of the rack focus is key here, in terms not only of image but also of sound, in that it orchestrates the disappearance and reappearance of the figure caught in the flux of multiple 'becomings': as the focus shifts from one auditory or visual plane to another, the silhouette and sound of the player seem to dissolve and fuse with the background, with the teeming, collective body of the crowd, and with the texture of the audiovisual matter itself. Such fluctuations resonate with Zidane's own description of his perception of his environment when on the pitch, given in a brief series of intertitles that quote him saying: 'When you are deep into the match, you don't really hear the crowd. At the same time, you can almost choose what you want to hear.' In Deleuze and Guattari's definition, 'becoming' offers a radical alternative to dual and fixed notions of the subjective body. It suggests that bodies and identities change through 'contamination', in an ongoing process of exchange that takes place at the level of the 'molecular': that is, at the micro level of perception – of visual and sound matter in movement and the way these interact and change – as opposed to the macro or 'molar' level of organization concerned with ideological, social and psychological frameworks.[14] It is the thrill of such an endless potential for 'becoming' – becoming-crowd, becoming-player, becoming-film – that is encapsulated in the film's striking fluctuations in focus and sound mixing.

14 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley et al. (London: Athlone Press, 1984), p. 8.

There is, however, a deep ambivalence embedded in the inclusiveness and connectivity both depicted in, and elicited by, the film. On the one hand, the 'macro' level always resurfaces, inevitably bringing to mind the great paradox that underpins Gordon and Parreno's film: in a contemporary Europe dominated by xenophobic fears, the most famous and admired man is a footballer of Algerian–Kabyle origins. On the other hand, in its treatment of the Zidane figure and of the event of the match in connection with imaging and media globalization, it raises the issue of technology's impact on subjective perception, the relation of subjective experience to historical and mediated time, and, by extension, the commodification of the relation of the subject to the objective world.

This web of interrelationships is emblematized in a sequence that creates an unexpected tear in the fabric of the film. Midway through, at half-time, a montage of newsreels is inserted – images with intertitles, taken from television news broadcasts that form a kaleidoscopic evocation of events taking place on the same day as the match (from pictures of floods in Montenegro to images of Elian Gonzales on Cuban television; from the announcement of the sale of a *Star Wars* spaceship on eBay to the description of a terrorist attack in Najaf, Iraq, that includes a glimpse of a bystander wearing a Zidane T-shirt). It is as if the body of the film itself had become porous, a sensitive surface through which heterogeneous footage can emerge. The insertion of the sequence of newsclips certainly collapses geographical and temporal boundaries, appearing to connect the stadium to the outside world. And yet we might wonder if this *rapprochement* is in fact about connectivity; or if it is, rather, underscoring the disconnect, the impossibility of rendering mass information meaningful, the sense of helplessness in front of the endless, overwhelming flood of synchronous yet unrelated facts that, in Braudel's words, 'amounts to a horror of the event'[15] – and, beyond, the failure of cinema and television to offer a relevant vision of history.

15 Fernand Braudel, *On History*, trans. Sarah Matthews (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 28; cited in Paddy Scannell, 'Broadcasting historiography and historicality', *Screen*, vol. 45, no. 2 (2004), pp. 130–41.

Crucially, the newsclip sequence is not woven through the film, nor through the game, but confined to half-time, which on television is normally the break reserved for commercial sponsors to hawk their wares. Current events thus arguably acquire the status of advertisements – a transformation epitomized by the Zidane T-shirt worn by the bystander in the newsclip of Iraq. The onlooker may wear a Zidane shirt, but Zidane himself wears a Siemens Mobile shirt. The international makeup of both the filmmakers (Gordon is Scottish and Parreno is French–Algerian) and the football team, and the film's eponymous emphasis on the French–Algerian–Kabyle star footballer's playing for Real Madrid, mirror the global advertising slogans that traverse the pitch and the screen. Like the team itself, an *über-équipe*, the advertisements are transnational, attempting to transcend national boundaries whilst inevitably drawing attention to them (Siemens is German, Movistar and Fortuna are Spanish, Kellogg's is American and BP is British–Dutch). The presence of the 'outside' world, a larger, becoming-globalized world, is further evoked in the babel of languages spoken by the players and commentators (Spanish, French and English) and by the advertising logos which constitute a kind of multinational hieroglyphics. All of these sign systems converge on the illuminated advertising panel that adorns the film like a frieze on which slogans appear in flat space, in contrast to the rounded depth of the playing field. The messages move across the panel to form a 'graphic unconscious',[16] the products advertised inevitably rubbing off on Zidane himself in a kind of sympathetic magic. The name 'Movistar' elicits the glamour of Zidane's star turn, wryly commenting on the camera's embrace of him and on the celestial explosions of flash bulbs and the swooning crowds; Siemens Mobile suggests the kinetic virility and choreographic intensity of Zidane's movements as well as the international reach of his appeal and his status as a media icon; and 'BP Ultimate Gasoline' suggests the fuel that powers the seemingly unstoppable force of nature that is Zidane, an association underscored by 'Fortuna Racing Machine', a professional motorcycle team. All of these trademarks are applicable in one way or another to Zidane, who does not stop running yet cannot escape them.

But in this film, the frieze is also swallowed into the overall sensory space as a moving strip of abstract motifs and fields of colour, the viewer's experience of the frieze thus shifting from an 'optical' reading position to a more haptic encounter. Here lies the great ambiguity of Gordon and Parreno's project, hovering between an aesthetic of connectivity and an aestheticization of language that inevitably invokes the aestheticization of politics.[17] For, as well as the relegation of the newsclips to half-time, and the commercialization of player and sporting event, there is the fascinating anthropological spectacle of the chanting crowd, arguably an illustration of nationalist fervour and surrogate warfare. There is also the knowledge that the telelenses that make it possible to create such an engrossing sense of physical closeness with the

16 See Tom Conley, *The Graphic Unconscious in Early Modern French Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

17 In light of mass culture's increasing adoption of haptic images for the purposes of advertising in the last decade or so, Laura Marks has added a cautionary note to her initial, somewhat euphoric, celebration of the haptic. See Marks, 'Haptic visuality'.

18 As Paul Virilio has argued, cinema and war are irremediably coupled through the elaboration, testing and production of the optical technology that was key to the evolution of both. Virilio, 'A travelling shot over twenty years', *War and Cinema* (London: Verso, 1991).

19 Annette Kuhn, 'Heterotopia, heterochronia: place and time in cinema memory', *Screen*, vol. 45, no. 2 (2004), p. 109.

20 In 'The daydreaming of a loner', Neyrat points to the insertion of the news clip about the sale of a *Star Wars* vessel, as well as to the use of satellite images, connecting this to Parreno's habit of 'adopting the point of view of an extra-terrestrial' in his work.

player and with the image itself were used courtesy of the US Department of Defense, which developed the technology.[18]

As in Annette Kuhn's concept of *heterochronia*, or cinema time's quality of 'being at once open-ended and circumscribed . . . both outside of normal time and embedded in it',[19] in *Zidane* the convergence of various modes of perception results in a complex layering of moods and temporalities: the mournful evocation of the twentieth century through conventional television broadcasts, which are already beginning to look somewhat dated; the futuristic edge of global interconnections that extends, as Neyrat puts it, to an intersidereal sense of the scale of things;[20] the precise framework of the match captured in 'real time'; Zidane's subjective memory of the match as 'a walk in the park'; and, finally, the enthralling, fluctuating beat of the film as it unravels in front of us. The great achievement of the film – that which makes it such an enchanting and highly topical cinematic experience – is, ultimately, the captivating work of reappropriation that its treatment of audiovisual material represents: its refusal, precisely, to let media images be confined solely to the realm of the commodified culture and formatted entertainment that vampirizes not only political and artistic fields but also our experience of the world and others. There is an intricate process of rhythmic and graphic correspondences and variations at play, but no hierarchy of images, in Gordon and Parreno's cinematic dream. Televised images are woven into the film matter, while experience, subjective and collective, great or insignificant, is reclaimed and returned to its temporal and physical density in the event of the film itself.

Part 2

Information, secrets, and enigmas: an enfolding-unfolding aesthetics for cinema

LAURA U. MARKS

1 On the avisual, see Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Atomic Light (Shadow Optics)* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

2 Rob Moss, 'This documentary moment', *Media Ethics*, vol. 19, no. 1 (2007).

3 Including touch, taste, and smell: by image I mean what is perceptible to the senses, not the visual image alone.

4 For a discussion of the psychological effects of the shift from perceptual culture to information culture, through the concepts of Charles Sanders Peirce and Henri Bergson, see Laura U. Marks, 'Immigrant semiosis', in Susan Lord and Janine Marchessault (eds), *Fluid Screens, Expanded Cinema: Digital Futures* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), pp. 284–303.

What kind of film is it whose protagonists are forbidden to speak; whose surfaces are avisual, often consisting only of paragraphs of text or tables of numbers;[1] whose climactic moment is the receipt of a file of old documents; whose director laments, 'Nobody wants to talk to [me]. There is nothing to see. ... What is there to film in any case?'[2] The chances are that it is a film about information.

These days, many of the images that appear to our senses[3] are no more than the effects of the information that generated them. The graphical user interface (GUI) of computers – a set of images that index actions of information manipulation – is directed to our eyes and ears, but this perceptual experience is simply the medium through which we receive information. The functions and aesthetics of GUI have been adapted to many other screen-based media like telephones, games, advertising and – retroactively – cinema. Moving images made for small screens, including television and movies for computers and handheld devices, often require to be read rather than perceptually experienced. Cinema itself, insofar as it invites us to scrutinize it for signs rather than fully perceive it with our senses, is often more like an interface to information than a sensuous experience. Even solid objects such as cars, running shoes and vegetable peelers are spectral emissions of the confident pulse of the marketing and design calculations that produced them.[4] This is to say nothing of those powerful information flows, such as the stock

market exchange, whose visual indicators are mere ciphers. In all these cases, what we experience with our senses is simply the end result of processes of information that are ultimately more significant than perceptible images.

The shift from perceptual to information culture might seem to pose an insurmountable problem for filmmaking and other arts of the perceptible. But as will be revealed in the course of this essay, images are in a position to 'unfold' information, and thus to connect it back to the world. I call this new model of the image *enfolding-unfolding aesthetics*.[5] It will be explicated in several Deleuzian registers, including a Bergsonian concept of the image, a Leibnizian concept of the fold, a Nietzschean concept of force and a geological concept of stratification.

For cinema studies, enfolding-unfolding aesthetics proposes a theory of representation and narrative as unfolding. The image unfolds from the world. An additional level, information, sometimes intervenes; so that while information unfolds from the world, the image unfolds from information. Cinematic conventions, insofar as they obviate the necessity of really seeing and hearing a film, operate as information. Narrative convention is one of the information filters that regularize how certain images are chosen from the set of all possible images. To establish this allows us to appreciate the creativity and singularity of many kinds of films, for it allows us to see that even 'cliched' unfolding is cliched in a variety of ways: narrative, ideological, action, comic, melodramatic, and so on, are all different kinds of informational filters applied to the infinite set of all images. Thus we can consider genres to correspond to manners of unfolding. National cinemas too can be understood as information filters that privilege certain images to unfold. Gilles Deleuze's *Cinema 1* details the many creative ways filmmakers deal with the relationship between information and image, while remaining in a classical mode that sees this relationship as a whole. A film's manner of unfolding – that is, its manner of selecting what is significant – is stylistic as well as conventional. Deleuze's 'auteurism' is really his attention to this manner of selection. Thus, for example, Jean Renoir is a director who lingers close to the world (or to what is defined below as the universe of images), selecting not the typical moments of a narrative but the particular moments. Deleuze's *Cinema 2* addresses filmmakers who attempt to come into contact with the universe of images itself, the Open, despite the constraints with which they necessarily operate.

This essay will explicate enfolding-unfolding aesthetics in relation to films in which the image struggles to emerge from information, focusing on just one way in which life is translated into information: namely, government secrets. I shall discuss two films that take information as their subject, revolving around secrets, surveillance and the kind of information that is produced under duress: the fiction film *The Lives of Others* (Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, Germany, 2007) and the documentary *Secrecy* (Rob Moss and Peter Galison, USA, 2008).

6 For Bergson, Deleuze writes, image is identical with movement: 'The material universe, the plane of immanence, is the *machinic assemblage* of *movement-images*.' Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: the Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. 58–59.

7 Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 315.

8 Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 3.

To explain enfolding-unfolding aesthetics I begin with simple questions. Where do images, those things that we perceive with our senses, come from? From the universe, infinite and unknowable in itself. Henri Bergson calls the universe the 'infinite set of all images'; Deleuze terms it the plane of immanence and also 'flowing-matter'.[6] I shall sometimes call it the universe of images, and sometimes, as I explain below, the Earth. The universe of images is amorphous, unarticulated and imperceptible as such. The events that occur here are momentary, passing in a flash and leaving no trace – unless they are 'captured' as information or image. The universe of images contains all possible images in a virtual state, and certain images arise from it, becoming actual.

Deleuze's cinema books are an extended investigation of how, from the universe of images, certain images become perceptible to us (or to the more disinterested perception of cinema). Certain aspects of the universe of images unfold directly as what I will call simple images: my glance falls on a fly buzzing on the windowpane, a scent tells me that my neighbour is burning incense, a scrap of memory comes to light. Such images may be slight indeed, but their affective charge is all the stronger because they arise from a relatively unmediated contact with the universe. But many images arise through a second mediation, as noted at the beginning of this essay. My intervention in Deleuze's theory of signs (itself a synthesis of Peirce, Bergson and others) is to insert another plane between images and the universe of images, which I call information: a plane through which the semiotic process passes before images can arise.

So what is information? Broadly, it is the set of images selected for their usefulness by particular interests. Information implies an interested viewpoint that gives form to the formless: a connotation that extends from the mediaeval scholastic Latin definition in the *OED*, 'the giving of a form or character to something', to cyberneticist Gregory Bateson's definition, 'information is the difference that makes a difference' – that is, a meaningful organization of noise into a signal.[7] One of the present-day connotations of information is quantification or regular sampling (by computers, for example), which selects images from the universe of images as material that can be easily worked. Historically all cultures have had ways to codify the perceptible, in order to discriminate in favour of those aspects of the world that are useful as information. 'Even perception . . . is an expression of forces which appropriate nature.'[8] What is unprecedented in contemporary culture is the dominance of information as a plane that shapes what it is possible to perceive. This is why we spend so much of our time not glancing out of (or at) the window, sniffing fugitive scents or stirring up memories, but responding to the images that arrive to us from advertising, public signage, alert sounds and screens of all sorts – images that ask not to be fully perceived but just read or deciphered; for they are images that are unfold from, and index, information. And yet the most important information in our information age does not produce images.

9   Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy M. Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York, NY: Zone Books, 1991).

10 See Charles Sanders Peirce, 'The principles of phenomenology', in Justus Buchler (ed.), *Philosophical Writings of Peirce*, (New York, NY: Dover, 1955), pp. 74–97.

11 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: the Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), pp. 265, 266.

What results is a model of three planes: the universe of images, information and image (figure 1). The universe of images is infinitely vaster than the small amounts of information and images drawn from it: it is the virtual to their actual. Inevitably, too, images and information pass back into the universe of images. As Bergson argued in *Matter and Memory*, past occurrences are no longer actual, but they continue to exist in a virtual state; in other words, they are real.[9] In Peirce's triadic epistemology,[10] the universe of images is a First, a unity unknowable in itself. Information, a Second, implies a struggle by which certain results are actualized, and not others. The image that arises from information is a Third, relaying the universe of images (First) through information (Second). The image points out relationships, teaching us something about how information is selected from the universe of images. Being triadic, enfolding-unfolding aesthetics avoids some of the pitfalls of dualistic theories of representation.

On the cinema of information, Deleuze has some provocative comments. He notes that with the occurrence of new computational and cybernetic automata, the configuration of power shifted: 'power was diluted in an information network where "decision-makers" managed control, processing and stock across intersections of insomniacs and seers'. Automata themselves became characters, like HAL the computer in *2001: a Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick, 1968); but people themselves started to behave like computers: 'Rohmer's puppet characters, Robbe-Grillet's hypnotized ones, and Resnais's zombies are defined in terms of speech or information, not of energy or motivity'.[11] Elsewhere Deleuze characterizes conspiracy films as those in which reality is doubled by information, and information, the tool of power, is mistaken for power itself:
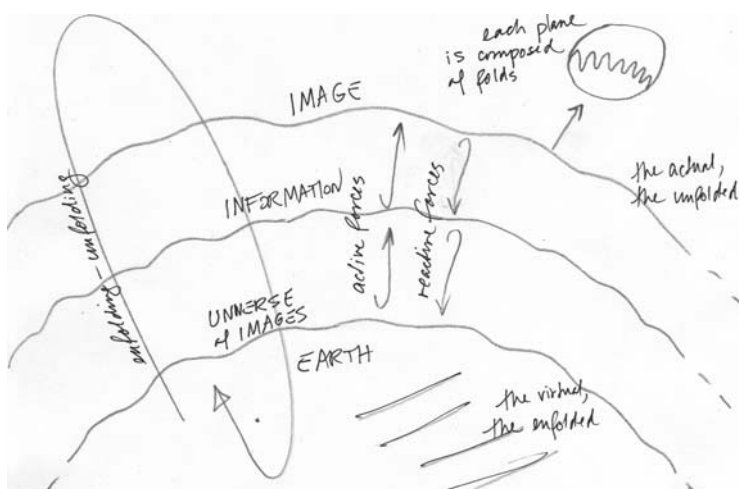
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Fig. 1

12 Deleuze, *Cinema 1: the Movement-Image*, p. 210.

In Lumet, the conspiracy is the system of reception, surveillance and transmission in *The Anderson Tapes*; *Network*, also, doubles the city with all the transmissions and reception that it ceaselessly produces, whilst *The Prince of the City* records the whole city on magnetic tape. And Altman's *Nashville* fully grasps this operation which doubles the city with all the clichés that it produces, and divides in two the clichés themselves, internally and externally, whether optical or sound clichés and psychic clichés.[12]

A cliche is the image that has been preselected, in an organized fashion, by a regime of information.

Many genres specifically privilege information: the conspiracy film, the caper film, the spy movie. The cinema of the information age observes the transformation of individuals to 'dividuals': the quantification of people according to their usefulness and controllability as information; a principle of 'universal modulation'. In the 1950s a series of films depicted the struggles of 'the man in the gray flannel suit', a corporate worker who was demoted from individual to dividual, and the crisis of masculinity that resulted.[13] More recently a rash of computer-era films feature individuals discovering that they are not even cogs in the wheel but, as in the *Matrix* films (Andy and Larry Wachowski, 1999, 2003), bits in a system of universal modulation.[14]

The two films discussed here respond to the way information, and the control of information, invisibly structure the perceptible world. *The Lives of Others*, set in the former German Democratic Republic in 1984 and later, depicts vividly how the texture of life contorts under the omnipresent surveillance of the Stasi, the Ministry for State Security. Two of the main characters are lovers, the actor Christa-Maria Sieland and the idealistic writer Georg Dreymann. The Stasi puts them under surveillance with the intent of compromising Sieland and entrapping Dreymann, who is determined to publish an article exposing the high suicide rate in the GDR. (For this task the editor of the West German newspaper *Der Spiegel* gives him a special typewriter, which happens to have a red ink ribbon.) Gerd Wiesler is the Stasi captain who takes on the assignment to observe them.

The Lives of Others contrasts the worldly, sensuous life of Dreymann, Sieland and their friends with the information-centred life of Wiesler. The space of their apartment is a space in touch with the sensuous world: there they serve food and drink to friends; there people talk, laugh, weep and sleep; Dreymann plays music on the piano; he and Sieland make love and gently touch each other. It is filmed in warm tones that emphasize the perceptual richness of this life and the meaning that arises from it. Wiesler, by contrast, occupies a space drained of perceptual detail. The listening post he occupies in the empty apartment above Sieland and Dreymann's is dark, lit only by the bluish lights of his monitors. Wiesler listens through headphones, straining to extract information from the sounds he hears; his face is immobile, his beautiful and expressive eyes

13 See Steven Cohan, *Masked Men: Masculinity and the Movies in the Fifties* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997).

14 See, for example, Yvonne Spielman, 'Elastic cinema: technological imagery in contemporary science fiction films', *Convergence*, vol. 9, no. 3 (2003), pp. 56–73.

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attempt to veil themselves. The Stasi offices are, needless to say, also sensuously bereft: even meals in the cafeteria are treated as opportunities to gather information about colleagues. Wiesler's spartan apartment is another sign of his quantified life: when he calls in a prostitute, she chides him for not booking enough time.

In *Secrecy*, too, a world of sensuous, material life struggles against a world of information. In its two intertwining central stories, the protagonists struggle to give flesh to the dry documents that conceal state secrets. One story began in 1948: a B-29 bomber crashed while carrying out some kind of secret testing. The widows of the crash victims petitioned to see the classified reports on the accident, but the US Supreme Court threw out the petition, asserting that to reveal the documents would endanger national security. This case, *Reynolds v United States* of 1953, was the precedent for hundreds of other cases that protected classified documents in the name of state security. Fifty years later, Judy Lowther, the daughter of one of the men killed in the crash, manages to find the accident report – on an internet site – and finds that the secrecy for which the US military petitioned was a coverup of simple negligence. The other story is about the legal case *Hamdan v Rumsfeld*, which established that a prisoner at Guantánamo has the right to habeas corpus in his trial – a right that US President George W. Bush had dismissed in a secret memo. The principle of habeas corpus – literally, 'you [should] have the body' – asserts that legal information arises from and affects the material world, something the Bush–Cheney administration ignored in their concerted efforts to bypass public accountability and prevent public access to information. The US Supreme Court ruled in favour of *Hamdan*, but shortly thereafter the Bush administration passed a new law to circumvent the ruling.

People who produce information for the State – like the Stasi's hundred thousand employees and its two hundred thousand informants, according to *The Lives of Others*; or the employees of the CIA and the National Security Administration in *Secrecy* – align themselves with the State's interests and its desire to surveil and control its citizens. These people – vital and fleshly though most of them are – subsist on the plane of information: they identify with it, and they seek to protect it. The bracingly articulate former CIA bureau chief Melissa Mahle tells how she had to conceal the nature of her work from her family and friends, to fake her marriage, to produce for others an image of her life that was effectively a reaction, a decoy from her information life.

These same agents admit that information is slow to adapt. Mahle explains the CIA's intelligence failure in Somalia in terms of conflicting information structures; the CIA's 'need-to-know' protocol (a Cold War information management system) could not deal with the distributed network strategies of Osama bin Laden and his associates. A fascinating montage accompanies this discussion, moving from black-and-white shots of filing cabinets to railway tracks, highways, telephone cables, neural networks and, finally, matrices of numbers – an apt metaphor for

15 See Peter Galison, 'Images scatter into data, data gather into images', in Peter Weibel and Bruno Latour (eds), *Iconoclash: Beyond the Image Wars in Science, Religion and Art* (Karlsruhe: ZKM, 2002), pp. 300–22. On informational images, see James Elkins, 'Art history and images that are not art', *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 77, no. 4 (1995), pp. 553–71.

16 Gilles Deleuze, *Le Pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (Paris: Minuit, 1988), p. 9.

17 See Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, 'The actual and the virtual', trans. Elliot Ross Albert, in *Dialogues II*, second edition (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 148–52.

18 On the plane of immanence, see Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Minuit, 1991), Chapter 2.

19 The dimension of force is fundamental to Peirce's semiotics as well, and informs Deleuze's approach in *Cinema 1*. As well as the cinema books, see Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: the Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003) for broad accounts of the semiotic process.

20 Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 40.

21 Ibid., pp. 40–55.

22 Dorothea Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), p. 94.

23 Mario Perniola, *Enigmas: the Egyptian Moment in Society and Art*, trans. Christopher Woddall (London: Verso, 1995), p. 6.

the shift from centralized to fluid, networked forms of communication. Interestingly, considering that one of the directors of *Secrecy* is Peter Galison, the historian of scientific imaging, these shots also gradually shift from photographs of concrete objects to 'informational images' of things that are not normally visible, or not visible at all.[15]

Enfolding-unfolding aesthetics is founded, needless to say, on a theory of the fold. This begins with Leibniz's principle that matter is continuous, such that the smallest element of matter is not a particle but a fold. This principle allows us, following Deleuze, to conceive of matter and the plane of immanence itself as continuous and consistent, like pliant, infinitely large surfaces that are composed of infinite folds.[16] Since the plane of immanence can be thought of as a membrane through which virtualities pass to become actualities,[17] we can consider the actual to be infinitely enfolded in the virtual. In each of the three planes of enfolding-unfolding aesthetics, the universe of images, information and image, an infinity of stuff lies virtual or enfolded.[18] Now and then certain aspects of those virtual events are unfolded, pulled out into the next plane.

A further ingredient in enfolding-unfolding aesthetics is force. In his theory of signs, Deleuze emphasizes that the semiotic process takes place under a deforming force, a pressure exerted on the plane of immanence, a 'will' whereby certain things unfold and not others.[19] What I call images and information are symptoms of a flow of forces.[20] A Nietzschean approach helps us to understand the nature of the forces that unfold and enfold these planes. Force is also the source of the affect that accompanies every movement of unfolding, or refusal to unfold. For a certain virtuality to be actualized – that is, for a fold to unfold – we could say a force 'pushes out' from the plane of immanence at the same time as another force 'pulls out'. Virtualities push through the plane of immanence in an active and creative movement, unfolding, bringing something new into the world. At the same time, established, actual forces 'pull' at the plane of immanence, privileging those things to unfold that confirm an already existing state of things. These are what Nietzsche calls reactive forces.[21] As Dorothea Olkowski emphasizes, 'For Nietzsche, the history of a thing consists of the forces that take hold of it and the struggle between forces for possession, a history that is obscured by the functions that the winning force imposes on the thing'.[22]

Each plane also resists unfolding. As Mario Perniola emphasizes, a fold protects what is unfolded.[23] The struggle is over what gets to remain enfolded, what is unfolded, and who decides. *The Lives of Others* pits the surveillant Stasi, those who would unfold 'the lives of others' into useful information, against the surveilled East German citizens. To evade surveillance, the citizens change their behaviour, adopt subterfuges of enfoldment: to keep their conversation from being heard the writers play loud music while they talk, show each other written messages, or meet outdoors. Remaining enfolded seems like a pretty good strategy, but

ultimately it is a reactive strategy that expends energy on resistance instead of creativity and produces twisted, little images.

The Lives of Others gives us to understand that Wiesler, whose profession is to unfold secrets, begins to realize that some things are too precious to unfold. Wiesler is the film's most 'enfolded' character. A man designated by the information world he inhabits as 'HGW XX/7', he comes to long for the active life represented by the couple. He is attracted to the freedom and the loving trust that Dreymann and Sieland share. As artists they are Nietzsche's prototype of the free individual; while as an information worker Wiesler is enslaved (wanting a taste of their experience, he steals Dreymann's book of poems by Brecht). Choosing to protect the couple, he destroys his own career.

Recognition is a form of unfolding that is often forced. Celebrity and other kinds of public recognition are crass because they unfold not the individual in all his or her complexity but information about that individual that has already been filtered in terribly predictable ways. Similarly, surveillance is the State's power to articulate selected aspects of the lives of the people under surveillance. In turn, their lives take the shape of the interests of the State. In *The Lives of Others* a few aspects of Sieland's life matter to the Stasi: she is a celebrated actress; she is connected to the subversive writer Dreymann; she is attractive; she wants to continue her career; she is addicted to illegal drugs. This is the shape Sieland takes on the plane of information. Using its selective knowledge against her, the Stasi forces her to conform to her information shape by making her inform against Dreymann and give sexual favours to the Minister in order to maintain her career and her access to pills. In the film, her only creative recourse against the violence of this information unfolding is suicide – the tragic strategy of radical enfoldment. But the withholding of recognition can also be a form of murder, as it is for the playwright Janka in *The Lives of Others*. Blacklisted by the State, he loses his public identity as an artist. He takes this punishment of forced enfolding to its darkest conclusion: like Sieland, he kills himself.

Filmmakers have many aesthetic strategies of unfolding and enfolding, either with or against the grain of information, and of tapping the affective flow that accompanies these. A fiction film's power is to emphasize the emotion and affect that respond to these revelations, through music, gestures, affection-images. So in the final shot of *The Lives of Others*, when Wiesler learns that Dreymann has acknowledged his kindness and sacrifice, his face, so carefully expressionless throughout the film, opens like a flower. A documentary may seek to extract affects from the smiles, tears and moral struggles of its informants, as *Secrecy* does. But a documentary about information has few other surfaces to unfold, since the visual nature of its object is generally textual. So the makers of *Secrecy* added animation, that least indexical of time-based images. Papers stamped 'Secret' float in space like lost souls. Ruth Lingford contributed rough, woodcut-like animations whose transformations capture the affects of secrecy, fear and violence. A farmer's hoe becomes a gun, and

the farmer becomes a dog menacing a captive, then a prison guard pulling the prisoner on a leash. Any of us, these fluid images suggest, is capable of the cruelty of the Americans at Abu Ghraib.

The final element of enfolding-unfolding aesthetics is geology. Deleuze and Guattari refer sometimes to the fundamental plane as the plane of consistency, 'the Earth, the absolutely deterritorialized'.[24] Their geological conceptualization of the world is a massive plane (one could think of it as a curved planetary surface) from which, in the passing of time, strata differentiate themselves, give rise to certain events, and eventually are transformed or crumble away. The Earth is that from which all images emerge and to which they all return.[25] To double the Bergsonian 'set of images' with the Earth adds denseness and heaviness to Bergson's luminous, quasi-mathematical concept. When information and image fold back into the universe of images, they return to a state of latency and undifferentiation: they enrich the soil of the Earth (and make it potentially radioactive) with the prospect of a future unfolding.[26] The Earth is the repository of what Bergson calls the present-that-passes: all those past presents piled up like leaves, compressing, decomposing, in an infinite compost heap. *La mémoire qui se réduit en cendres* (memory as it reduces to ashes): that, in the words of Jean-Dominique Bauby, is what the Earth feels like to most of us.[27]

In a given era, Deleuze and Guattari write, certain strata arise from the Earth, giving form to matter and constraining the way this form can be expressed. Strata have double articulation, as Deleuze and Guattari explain in geological terms. The first articulation chooses molecular units upon which it imposes forms: in geology, this is sedimentation. The second articulation establishes stable structures and constructs the molar compounds or substances in which they are actualized: in geology, this is folding.[28] In the new stratum that has arisen in our age, image is articulated by information.[29] When information intervenes, image no longer directly expands from the universe of images but is the product of quantification. The information society is a society of control, which quantifies its objects in order to subject them to universal modulation.[30]

When information that has been kept secret finally becomes accessible, or unfolds, as image, it is often in the form of an index, that most earthly of signs. Both *Secrecy* and *The Lives of Others* rely often on indexes. In *Secrecy*, grainy photocopies of the documents of the B-29 crash are the slim thread that unfolds all the events leading to the crash – weak mechanical parts, unopened parachutes, skull fractures – into a chillingly banal set of information. Fifty years later, what happened during that crash, the set of images that remained enfolded all this time, is finally, though only partially, brought to light as the family members, lawyers and filmmakers tenaciously 'pull open' historical folds in the information the CIA wished to keep enfolded.

Secrecy and *The Lives of Others* dwell on state evidence that piles up until it begins to resemble the strata of the Earth itself. Both films feature

24 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, '10,000 BC: the geology of morals', in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 40–56, and passim.

25 Ibid., p. 266.

26 On radioactive images, a variant of what Deleuze calls the fossil-image, see Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), pp. 71–6.

27 Jean-Dominique Bauby, *Le scaphandre et le papillon* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1997).

28 Deleuze and Guattari, '10,000 BC: the geology of morals', p. 40.

29 In this stratum, information is what Deleuze and Guattari (using the linguist Hjelmslev's terms) call the form of content.

30 Gilles Deleuze, 'Postscript on the societies of control', *October*, no. 59 (1992), pp. 3–7.

panning shots of seemingly endless rows of filing cabinets reaching to the ceiling (figure 2). After the fall of the GDR, the State made public its secret files on thousands of citizens. Dreymann goes to the Stasi 'Research Site and Memorial' to read his declassified files, which a clerk lifts down from one of hundreds of massive filing cabinets (figure 3). As he reads, with increasing incredulity, the evidence of his life under surveillance, the years of impacted information which the Stasi extracted from his life with Sieland, finally unfold as images. A red thumbprint on the last page of Wiesler's report reveals that it was the spy who protected Dreymann. Wiesler hid the typewriter, with its red ink ribbon, that would have condemned the writer to death.

Secrecy, too, attends closely to the index's moment of visibility. In the documentary, all manner of archival materials – film, television, paper, newsprint, photographs – are reshot with attention to their medium of origin. Unlike some documentaries that flatten all their materials assembled from different media into a common substance, *Secrecy* emphasizes that each artefact is a prize wrested into visibility. Paper documents are filmed in slanting light, with sound emphasizing their

Fig. 2.
Secrecy (Rob Moss and Peter Galison, USA, 2008).

Fig. 3.
The Lives of Others (Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, Germany 2007).

slight roughness and the sticky materiality of the 'Secret' stamped onto them. The documents become physical characters, with substance and heft, as their secrets are revealed.

In an index, information and image touch, like two sides of a coin.[31] Indexes are affective because of this intense moment of contact between planes. Fifty years after the B-29 crash, Patricia Reynolds chokes on tears when she tells of finally seeing the report of her husband's death: 'For some reason reading this report . . . brought it to reality'. Lowther, the daughter of another of the men who died in the crash, describes as an embodied experience how she received the documents of his death in a manila envelope, sat down at home to read them, and was physically overcome by the revelations they contained. Thomas Blanton of the National Security Archive at George Washington University relates an event he witnessed at the opening exhibit of the Soviet archives in Moscow in 1992. 'Suddenly there's a big commotion and a guy comes down the stairs on a stretcher, an old pensioner with his medals from the great patriotic war, grey hair and beard, old and gaunt. He said, "I knew that Stalin and Molotov had signed that deal with Hitler and Ribbentrop. But right up there they had it and I could actually see it, and I passed out."' In all these cases, the index makes a connection between information and hitherto lost events; and this connection is realized affectively, in the body.

Most information never unfolds; instead it returns to become part of the Earth. The index is a kind of sign that is so material it arises to perception only at the point when it is ready to return to the Earth. *Secrecy* emphasizes this reenfolding when interviewee Steven Aftergood, from the Federation of American Scientists' Government Secrecy project, describes the billions of documents destroyed every year. As he speaks we see a huge shredder pull reams of paper into its enormous maw (figure 4). 'The financial cost of secrecy grew by a billion dollars to an unprecedented $7.5 billion in a single year', Aftergood continues. 'That's the size of a budget of a cabinet-level government agency.' Backlit, the shredded pages scatter like leaves; the next shot shows them compressed into huge bricks. Secrets return to the Earth literally, as landfill, and the lives they touched will never be known. In *The Lives of Others*, the secrets of the Earth unfold when Dreymann learns, years later, that his apartment had been under surveillance. When he finds the microphone and follows its cords to every room, ripping them out of the wallpaper, this small event is like the Earth erupting to reveal secrets that had been buried within it long ago.

If secrets are folds, the goal of thought is not to unfold a secret and reveal the truth, but to recognize how the secret constitutes knowledge by virtue of being enfolded. Mario Perniola argues this, drawing on Deleuze's conception of thought as explication or unfolding. From an etymology of the term *explicare*, 'it follows that knowledge is not simply the revelation of a secret, nor the illumination of something that was obscure, nor lastly the expounding of a concept given *a priori*, but the

32 Perniola, *Enigmas*, p. 5.

33 Ibid., p. 10.

drawing out, the unwinding, the ex-pression of something that is tangled, wound up, gathered in'.[32]

Secrets only confirm the power of those who possess them. Perniola prefers the concept of the enigma, which escapes the control of anyone. The enigma is that point of resistance/emergence that is 'capable of simultaneous expression on many different registers of meaning, all of which are equally valid, and it is thus able to open up an intermediate space that is not necessarily bound to be filled'.[33] An enigma is a point on the plane of immanence that can never be unfolded once and for all. The virtual yields actualities according to pressures on it that are always specific. Such is the crashed aircraft in *Secrecy*: it is a secret insofar as the US government covers it up. But the film reveals the crash to be an enigma, which has repercussions in many different registers: for the widows, the subsequent legal petitioners, the military engineers, the unopened parachutes, the ground where the aircraft crashed, and the filmmakers themselves. Similarly, the tragedy of *The Lives of Others* is that things the State deems secrets, such as Janka's suicide and Sieland's addiction, are actually enigmas.

Enfolding-unfolding aesthetics values the constant movement of unfolding and enfolding and critiques the forces that try to still the movement in order to regulate the production of images. The endless process of unfolding and enfolding is life itself. Politically, the model I am proposing distinguishes between a free life, in which individuals (human and non-human) ourselves actualize certain aspects of the universe of images; and an enslaved life, in which we react to information, or to those images already actualized for us. Given that the fundamental nature of the unfolding and enfolding universe is constant flow, trying to stay enfolded or 'below the radar' of information is a form of suicide. Given the ubiquity of regimes of information, a better strategy is to cultivate enigmas. An enigma, we

might say, retraces its historical path in the cycle from the universe of images, to information, to image, back to the Earth, to be unfolded in a new way, or to stay latent. This movement of enfolding is a way of understanding what Nietzsche calls the Eternal Return.[34] All that is past returns to a state of virtuality, which may unfold again, *not* to confirm an existing state of things but to destabilize it – as when a buried secret comes to light. Cultivating enigmas is a radical strategy of remembering; and of forgetting, which is sometimes the more creative act.

Screen theory can ask images where they came from: did they unfold from information, or from the universe itself? It can trace the process by which an image unfolded from information, and by which that information in turn unfolded from the universe of images, asking at each point: Why did it unfold this way? If this image is here, what images remain virtual? As posited above, the most interesting films are those that bear the traces of their own unfolding. We can now add that the most intriguing of these are films that unfold not truthfully, but enigmatically. When so much of our experience occurs at the level of information, screen theory can evaluate the ways in which films struggle to bring information into the perceptible; but, even more importantly, it can respect how cinema cultivates enigmas, images that will never be done with unfolding.

Part 2

Freud as media theorist: mystic writing-pads and the matter of memory

THOMAS ELSAESSER

Amongst all the conceptual uncertainty now surrounding the validity of his work, the one key idea of Sigmund Freud that has entered the culture like no other is that of the *Unconscious.* One can think of it as Freud's answer to the question of human agency: are we self-determined, do we know what we are doing, or are we never fully self-present in our actions, however rational they appear to us? But today the Unconscious can also be understood differently: not as a psychic fact, to explain discrepancies between intention and action, but as the necessary hypothesis in response to a problem for which no other assumption could provide a satisfactory or even plausible answer. What if the Unconscious were a 'place-holder' rather than a place? A virtual space, the locus where two apparently incompatible conceptions of the working of the psyche converge, making the Unconscious the 'provisional' answer to a problem that Freud encountered. And what is this problem? My suggestion – and not only mine – is that it is the issue of 'memory'. As Freud boldly noted in 1895: 'any psychological theory deserving consideration must provide an explanation of memory'.

In what follows, I shall explore this idea by focusing on the parts of Freud's work that try to tackle the problems of inscription/recording and of storage/retrieval – two essential aspects of memory, but also of the audiovisual media, in particular cinema, now at the crossroads between the photographic and the digital. Freud's best-known papers confronting

the question of memory are 'A project for a scientific psychology' (1895) and 'A note upon the "mystic writing-pad"' (1925); and although the two texts are thirty years apart they show a remarkable consistency of thinking. They are also indicative of how persistently this question of memory preoccupied Freud, without leading him to a satisfactory solution. Consider how, in 1925, he summarized the problem of memory:

> All the forms of auxiliary apparatus which we have invented for the improvement or intensification of our sensory functions are built on the same model as the sense organs themselves or portions of them: for instance, spectacles, photographic cameras, ear-trumpets. Measured by this standard, devices to aid our memory seem particularly imperfect, since our mental apparatus accomplishes precisely what they cannot: it has an unlimited receptive capacity for new perceptions and nevertheless lays down permanent – even though not unalterable – memory traces of them.'[1]

1 Sigmund Freud, 'A note upon the "mystic writing-pad"' (1925), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works, Volume XIX*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), p. 228; 'A project for a scientific psychology' (1895), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works, Volume I*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1966), p. 175.

In this and the passages that follow, where he explains how a simple mechanical device – the mystic writing-pad or *Wunderblock* – combines an 'ever-ready receptive surface' with the 'permanent traces of the notes that have been made upon it', Freud shows how our senses along with our brain, when taken together as the 'psychic apparatus', are able to accomplish something which for any technical apparatus is apparently impossible to achieve, namely to combine the function of (sense-data) transmission and the function of (sense-data) storage. It is as if psychoanalysis had to be invented in order to bridge this gap, and to explain – via the positing of the Unconscious – how the 'perception-consciousness system' receives but does not retain perceptions, while the 'system of the Unconscious' preserves not perceptions but 'excitations', which become 'permanent', in the form of mnemic traces.

As not only 'A note upon the "mystic writing-pad"' but also 'A project for a scientific psychology' make clear, consciousness and memory, transmission and storage, are mutually exclusive. Consciousness (the perceptual system) should be imagined as a feedback system or a dynamic circuit, and therefore must not retain any data, otherwise it could not respond to the environment and be self-regulating. If, on the other hand, that which Freud called the Unconscious were unable to retain data and store unlimited quantities, there could be no 'memory' of any kind – whether repressed, habitual, voluntary or involuntary. By arguing that 'any psychological theory deserving consideration must provide an explanation of memory', Freud raises the bar for himself, and asks how to conceive of memory; which is to say, how to picture the relation between input, storage and processing. It is in this sense that the invention of the Unconscious can be understood as a partial answer.

But if the problem was already clearly posed in 1895, and only in 1925 found an apparent answer in 'A note upon the "mystic writing-pad"', it raises other questions, not least one about the mystic writing-pad itself: what sort of 'answer' does it constitute; is it a serious suggestion of a

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workable media technology; is it a metaphor that alludes to a technical solution, which by invoking what is essentially a child's toy deliberately sidesteps the issue of media technology; or is it no more than a personal in-joke? Indeed, it could be the case that Freud deliberately used such an improbable – and yet on second thoughts apt – example precisely in order not to have to declare himself on the technical media of transmission and storage that were developing during his lifetime; because – rightly or wrongly – he judged that they did not fulfil his own requirements for a memory apparatus that could replicate or 'improve' on human memory.

In taking this approach, I am positing another Freud: neither the psychoanalyst nor the cultural critic; neither the Freud familiar from film theory nor the 'French Freud', whether centred on the function of language in the formation of the Unconscious (Lacan) or the one censoring desire through 'repression' rather than its liberation/proliferation through the drive (Foucault, Deleuze/Guattari).[2] Rather, I want to imagine Freud the media theorist. He qualifies as such for a number of reasons, the main one being that he thought of the body/mind as a storage and recording medium as well as an input/output device. What interested him were the following parameters: sensory input (mainly sound and vision) and its output, representability (visualization, narrativization, linguistic representation including slips of the tongue and parapraxes). Secondly, Freud was interested in temporality (as rupture, gap or discontinuity rather than as time's linear arrow of sequence and succession). He speculated that time was a dimension that mankind had invented to protect itself from discontinuity and the contingent, and that it was a subjective category (rather than the physical, thermodynamic principle of entropy); this is why he introduced the notion of *Nachträglichkeit*, or deferred action, suggesting that in our thinking about 'time' we let effects rewrite their own 'causes'. Finally, and perhaps not coincidentally, Freud had a great interest in archaeology – in the trace, the index and the imprint as forms of inscription and recording – as well as in geological strata, which gave rise to another of his topological models of the psyche. But if Freud is to be taken seriously as a media theorist, how can one explain his hostility towards, and neglect of, the technical media of his time, and how does his interest in memory fit into a broader media history?

In film theory, the constellation around 'French Freud' tried to reinterpret perception, visuality and the optical-specular, centring initially on looking, the gaze, their relation to identity and sexual difference and, subsequently, on the self-monitoring of panopticism as an aspect of selfconsciousness and the formation of a socially adaptable ego.[3] The constellation I am invoking, of Freud the theorist of auxiliary memory and technical media, shifts this perspective away from film to a more general consideration of technical media. It comprises Jacques Derrida (rereading Freud, in his 'Freud and the scene of writing'), Mary Ann Doane (rereading Freud across one of the precursors of the cinema,

2 Among the many writings by French philosophers who refer to Freud, the key texts that prove relevant to film studies are: Jacques Lacan, 'The mirror phase as formative of the function of the I', in *Ecrits: a Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977); Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and ideological state apparatuses', in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London: New Left Books, 1971); Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley et al. (London: Athlone Press, 1984); Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (London: Penguin, 1990).

3 The numerous writings on 'cinema and psychoanalysis' include E. Ann Kaplan (ed.), *Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1990); Constance Penley (ed.), *The Future of an Illusion: Film, Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1989); Janet Bergstrom (ed.) *Endless Night* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999).

4 Jacques Derrida, 'Freud and the scene of writing', in *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 196–224; Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

the scientist and chronophotographer Etienne-Jules Marey) and Friedrich Kittler (rereading Jacques Lacan, and Lacan's interest in cybernetics and mathematics).[4] This trio's points of intersection – and their relevance to contemporary film theory – involve trace, inscription and writing, the function of speech and the voice, the relation between print culture and the cinema, the body as text, women and media-machines, and finally, the conception of time and intermittence.

Thus, if film theory from the 1960s to the early 1990s concentrated on Freud in order to understand questions of subjectivity and identity as these arise from filmic spectatorship and the cinematic apparatus when conceived as a Cartesian optical theatre, then Freud, the media theorist of this other constellation – that of a possible media/memory theory for the twenty-first century– proposes a theory of the visual and audial media that sees these questions more from the perspective of reproduction – as a problem of generation and replication, storage and processing. We would be dealing with a general mode of information transmission and transcoding, of which 'media/memory' in its widest sense (including 'history' and 'cultural memory', as well as machine-memory) is the special human form, but which at the limit encompasses the transmission of all information, including biological information (and which thus allows for non-human forms of memory).

Focused more narrowly, the argument would be that at the turn of the twentieth century technical media began to challenge the dominance of writing, and thus of symbolic notation, by emulating writing, thereby reproducing the effects of the medium which it sought to replace. Cinema, for instance, did this by developing a specific form of filmic narrative or storytelling ('classical cinema'), as well as by instantiating an ontology of trace and imprint ('realism', 'photographic indexicality', different regimes of 'verisimilitude'). A hundred years later, cinema is itself being challenged by other kinds of data flows. Contemporary data flows include, of course, sounds and images; but their 'generation' is no longer conceivable solely on the analogue model of trace and imprint, and their quantity, frequency and magnitude cannot be adequately processed and 'linearized' through narrative. Hence the current 'crisis' in our understanding of cinema, which we must increasingly learn to uncouple from narrative, just as we are revising our assumptions about photographic 'indexicality' and the evidentiary 'trace'. At the same time, the technical capacity of the audiovisual media to generate somatic-sensory experiences of extreme physical presence and bodily proximity (now called 'special effects' rather than 'realism') raises formidable challenges to both 'narrative' and 'representation'. It demands new forms of sorting and organizing data. Popular culture copes with the problem in the form of simplified cosmologies or by reviving mythological archetypes, but the avant garde (and aesthetic theory) are hard pressed to find the symbolic forms, the concepts and the new modalities of mnemic traces or visualizations that can register the momentous shifts in scale and volume.

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5 Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), p. 295.

6 Harun Farocki, *Nachdruck/Imprint* (New York, NY: Lukas and Sternberg, 2001); Thomas Elsaesser (ed.), *Harun Farocki: Working on the Sightlines* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004); Paul Virilio, *Guerre et cinema I: logistique de la perception* (Paris: Etoile, 1984). See also Laura Marks, 'Information, secrets and enigmas', in this issue.

7 See, for instance, Jacques Rancière, *La fable cinématographique* (Paris: Seuil, 2001).

8 See the tag clouds generated by online databases such as the Internet Movie Database, http://www.imdb.com/

9 Sigmund Freud, 'Beyond the pleasure principle' (1920), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works, Volume XVIII*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1955), p. 153; Walter Benjamin, 'The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction', in *Illuminations* (New York, NY: Schocken, 1972). See also Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993).

10 For a concise statement in English, see Niklas Luhmann, *Theories of Distinction: Redescribing the Descriptions of Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002).

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In short, the very amplification in the registration of audiovisual flows requires one to think differently about the cinema of the past, namely as an attempt (*pace* Lev Manovich) to make art out of footprints.[5] From this perspective, cinema is one culturally specific way of dealing with the question of memory or mnemic traces, and it can be usefully contrasted with other (mechanical) forms of data registration, data storage and data management. Among such comparable modes of technical memory and information transmission, one can think of the data-storing apparatus of science and the State – such as administration archives, surveillance records, military reconnaissance – or the visualization of data in medicine, meteorology, and so on. Filmmakers such as Harun Farocki and cultural theorists such as Paul Virilio have productively explored the various affinities of cinema with other 'vision machines' and data-processing devices.[6] For our own field of film studies, it might either revive the effort to reclaim cinema as a (romantic) art form par excellence,[7] or lead to the invention of something like a post-literary hermeneutics – perhaps as techniques of 'connected contingency', 'constructive instability' or 'calculated improbability', but at any rate as a form of pattern recognition rather than *Gestalt* recognition, with all the implications for both aesthetics and hermeneutics that this may have.[8]

It is in this context, and from such a contemporary perspective, that I want to consider the relevance of some of Freud's extremely bold models of interpretation for seemingly senseless and random data. It could also give us a new understanding of one of the most widely received ideas of Freud, formulated above all in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and taken up by Walter Benjamin in his conception of modernity as the cultural response to technical media's impact on the human perceptual system (what Benjamin called 'the optical Unconscious'). This is the idea that consciousness does not seek contact with the environment, but aims at *reducing contact*, and is thus best understood as a kind of protective shield, evolved over time to neutralize sensory overload and prevent perceptual overstimulation.[9] This would be in line with today's cognitivists' claim that perception is a mere sampling of visual data, reconstituted and processed by the brain; a view also endorsed by system theorists, with their notion of consciousness as self-reference and autopoesis.[10] The idea of a protective shield is also present in Freud's discussion of the *Wunderblock*, when he refers to the cellophane cover that protects the writing surface from dirt and damage. But above all, the structural asymmetry, in the case of human beings, between the quantity of data capture and the relatively restricted repertoire of data processing (if we regard our cultural store of narratives, poems and stories as 'processing programmes') encourages one to think of Freud's theories of memory (or, more widely, of how he pictured the relation between the perceptual-Conscious system and the mnemonic-Unconscious system) as also a problem of data management; and to ask oneself exactly what role Freud assigned to the image and visualization,

11 See the opening passage of Freud's famous essay on 'The "uncanny"' (1919), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works, Volume XVII*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1955), p. 219.

12 On this, see Christoph Asendorf, *Batteries of Life: on the History of Things and Their Perception in Modernity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993). One could argue that Freud's three different models of the psyche – the topographic (spatial), the structural (ego, superego, id) and the economic (preservation of energy, modelled on steam pressure) – each represents/implies a different concept of medium, while each also relates to a contemporary technology or science, including archaeology.

13 About another film project, Freud wrote 'I won't hold them back since filming seems to be as unavoidable as page-boy haircuts, but I won't have myself trimmed that way and do not wish to be brought into personal contact with any film'. Freud to Sandor Ferenczi, 14 August 1925. Freud's chief objection to a film about psychoanalysis was that he did 'not consider it possible to represent our abstractions graphically in any respectable manner'. Freud to Karl Abraham, 9 June 1925. Cited in Hilde C. Abraham and Ernst L. Freud (eds), *Sigmund Freud/Karl Abraham Briefe 1907–1926* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1965), pp. 355–71; also cited in: Thomas Ballhausen, Günter Krenn and Lydia Marinelli (eds), *Psyche im Kino: Sigmund Freud und der Film* (Vienna: Film Archiv Austria, 2006), pp. 321–22.

to sound and the voice, and to processing and programming in his version of the psychic apparatus.

Freud never abandoned the empirical sciences, as can be seen from the importance he attached to the key document of his early career, the tellingly entitled 'A project for a scientific psychology'. Nonetheless, his very familiarity with the major technological breakthroughs of his age, and his often oblique response to them, do present us with a paradox. On the one hand, there is much evidence in his work that he knew about revolutions in energy and transport such as the steam engine, hydraulic systems and the railways. The former figure as theoretical motifs in his energy model of the psyche, while his experiences on the railway frequently served him as examples of shock, of trauma, or of the uncanny.[11] Furthermore, there is clear evidence of Freud's awareness of the many innovations in the understanding and applications of electricity, such as electromagnetic fields, electric generators or electricity storage. Key notions of his psychoanalytic terminology – such as resistance, transference, excitation, discharge, cathexis, induction and conductivity – only make sense against the background of the discovery of the properties of electricity; so much so that one sometimes suspects that Freud thought of the psyche as a species of electric battery.[12]

This is one side of Freud. But the paradox arises when one recalls Freud's well-known and often-discussed ambivalence towards modern technology, especially media technologies. Freud was apparently more interested in the human body/psyche as (technical) medium than in technical media as such: in the face of the invasion of mass media he was, above all, a cultural conservative, as if his invention of psychoanalysis was aimed at preserving the embodied and gendered nature of communication against its increasing disembodiment, mechanization, decontextualization and automation. Thus, by all accounts Freud made little use of modern technology in his everyday life. He did not like radio, he was shy of photography, he used the typewriter sparingly and preferred to compose in longhand, and he refused to have the telephone connected to his consulting room or his private office. He certainly disapproved of the cinema, withdrawing his cooperation from a famous filmmaking project intended to popularize psychoanalysis, G.W. Pabst's *Geheimnisse einer Seele/Secrets of a Soul* (1926).[13] But perhaps the most crucial evidence of his technophobia, given that the basic technique of psychoanalysis (the talking cure) is that of recording speech, is the fact that he did not use the Dictaphone or any other recording technology of speech and voice. So, let us keep this apparent paradox in mind: that while Freud might not have utilized the technologies of his day in his practice, they were nonetheless all too present in his theory.

The first commentator to suggest that Freud possessed a media theory was Derrida, who discusses 'A note upon the "mystic writing-pad"' extensively in his essay 'Freud and the scene of writing'. Derrida shows how Freud vaccillated between thinking of the psyche as an optical system and as an 'inscription' or 'writing' system. Visual metaphors

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predominate in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, where one finds an entire scenography of telescopes, cameras, microscopes and magnifying glasses. By contrast, once Freud begins to speak of memory, as he does especially in 'A note upon the "mystic writing-pad"', the language is one of 'memory traces', of the violence with which sensory data break themselves a path (*Bahnung*) into the mental–material substratum and generally force their way into memory. Derrida notes how the *Wunderblock* as a child's toy inscribes marks or grooves on a wax background, and how these are then 'mystically' erased by lifting the plastic cover sheet. Memory here clearly recalls the ancient practice of the palimpsest, the writing process whereby mnemic impressions emerge, merge and re(e)merge through acts of layering and superimposition.

Derrida's interest in the mystic writing-pad is multifaceted. Firstly, it confirms his general thesis, namely that the metaphysics of presence in western philosophy is underwritten by a repression of writing, which nonetheless organizes every representational system thus far devised. Secondly, Derrida is able to show how the priority given to speech in psychoanalysis is still grounded in writing, because its effects on the psyche are described exclusively in terms of imprint, inscription and trace (*frayage*, as Derrida translates *Bahnung*); while the categories of Freud's dreamwork, such as condensation and displacement, are, as Roman Jakobson notes, analogous to the rhetorical figures of metaphor and metonymy, themselves modelled on certain dysfunctions of the brain.[14] But in his book *Archive Fever* Derrida also comments on the paradox noted above, namely the peculiar status of media technologies as at once absent and present in Freud, which Derrida sees – in a manner borrowed from Freud – as itself a repression haunted by the possibility of its return:

> One can dream or speculate about the geo-techno-logical shocks that would have rendered unrecognizable the scenery of psychoanalysis . . . [if] . . . Freud, his contemporaries, collaborators and immediate disciples, instead of writing thousands of letters by hand, had had at their disposal AT&T telephone credit cards, portable tape recorders, computers, printers, faxes, television, teleconferencing and above all electronic mail.[15]

Derrida's little game of anachronisms and hypotheticals gives me licence to introduce not so much an anachronism as a synchronism that may be at least as troubling, but also as revealing, as Derrida's image of Freud landing, say, at JFK airport equipped with an AT&T phone card. This figure of troubling contemporaneity with Freud is Thomas Edison. If we take Freud's metaphoric chains and semantic clusters in the 'Mystic writing-pad' essay and see them as referring not to writing, to hieroglyphs and palimpsests, but to Edison's successful attempts to record auditory data on wax cylinders and tinfoil – and add to this the knowledge that Edison developed the kineto*scope* originally in order to

14 Roman Jakobson, 'Two aspects of language and two types of aphasic disturbances', in Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle, *Fundamentals of Language* (The Hague: Mouton, 1956), pp. 67–96.

15 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: a Freudian Impression* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 24.

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16 On Thomas Edison's thinking on audio-vision, see Gordon Hendricks, *The Edison Motion Picture Myth* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1961).

17 See Serge Daney, 'Cinémétéorologie', *Libération*, 20–21 February 1982.

18 Mary Ann Doane, 'Temporality, storage, legibility: Freud, Marey and the cinema', in *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, pp. 33–68.

19 Ibid., pp. 34–5.

complement the phono*graph* and to synchronize it with an image machine – then the mystic writing-pad becomes even more mysterious and magical. It reproduces at the level of a *jeu d'enfant* – which is also a *jeu d'esprit* – an ambivalence also present in cinema, at least as conceived of by Edison, where writing (*graphein*) and seeing (*scopein*) are kept in play and in suspension.[16]

Seeing and writing hover over the technical media that make up cinema, in its basic apparatus as well as in its theoretical elaborations, referring back to the very beginnings of cinema this vexed question of the indexicality and iconicity of filmic recording; and suggesting that if we follow Edison and give priority to sound recording – understood as the laying of tracks of physiological data – then the cinematic image functions primarily as the index of a sound emanation or of a physiological-somatic presence and only secondarily as the imprint of a perception. The aesthetics of Jean-Marie Straub/Danielle Huillet, with their demand that spectators should see their films with their ears and hear them with their eyes, would seem to have taken up Edison's thinking and literalized its implications.[17]

Another theorist who has commented extensively on Freud's mystic writing-pad essay is Mary Ann Doane. In *The Emergence of Cinematic Time* she constructs yet another contemporaneity with Freud around cinema; this time not with the acknowledged fathers – the Lumière brothers or Thomas Edison – but with Etienne-Jules Marey, also a physiologist and a scientist, and one of the cofounders (with Eadweard Muybridge) of chronophotography.[18]

Doane's project seems very different from the one I am trying to identify; but she, too, is prepared to take Freud seriously both as a materialist and a media theorist:

> In Freud's work, time . . . seems to operate as a symptom whose effects are intensified by the excessive trauma of modernity so that modernity becomes, in part, a pathology of temporality. The impasse of his spatial model of memory forces him to produce a theory of temporality as the discontinuous mode of operation of the psyche itself. Time is not 'out there,' to be measured, but is instead the effect of a protective configuration of the psyche. Freud chooses for his exemplary machine and model, not the cinema, photography, or phonography, but the comparatively old-fashioned Mystic Writing-Pad. In contrast, Marey marshalled the latest technologies of sequential photography (and, in most historical accounts, anticipated the cinema) in order to capture and measure an objective temporality that nevertheless always seemed to elude representation. Together, Freud and Marey figure the limits of the representational problematic within which the cinema developed as a specific mode of organizing and regulating time. Both theorists conceptualized time as a problem of storage or of representation and its failure.[19]

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In other words, Doane takes up a number of the themes I have already touched upon, including Freud's theory of consciousness as a protective film or shield against shock and trauma. But she also stresses the pathology of cinema's promise of preserving and representing time in a continuous flow of images and sounds. Freud does not trust this superficial form of narrativizing of the contingent and the continuous, deciding instead that the sensory data flow mechanically produced can only be experienced as unrepresentable. In its emphasis on surface appearances and revelling in the accidental, cinema must have struck Freud, Doane remarks: 'as a veritable reservoir of meaninglessness'.[20] Where psychoanalysis counters the discontinuity and apparent meaninglessness of visual recall by retrieving, repairing and restoring the layers of data no longer accessible, cinema parodies, as it were, psychoanalysis by imposing on perception the logic of an order of the visible which ignores the very 'work' that, in the psychic apparatus, goes into recall, representation and legibility.

If, in light of the above-noted problem of combining perception and data input with storage and data processing, we venture to draw some conclusions that Doane might not herself draw, we could say that cinema has to be understood as an apparatus concerned with perception and the optical only as an initial step; but that its full conceptualization requires an additional dimension, namely that of storage and processing, which – and here Freud was right – cannot be solved by narrative. For those who have taken a historical, or rather an 'archaeological', perspective and have reexamined the so-called 'origins of cinema', this conclusion is almost self evident.[21] Both early cinema (or what is now called 'the cinema of attractions') and the avant garde have consistently refused narrative as a 'solution', even if they have done so for different reasons and with different arguments. Freud's contribution to this debate would be his insistence, so forcefully but also so obliquely expressed in the *Wunderblock* essay, that an apparatus, considered as archive or memory, needs to differentiate clearly and separate the transmission function (mirror or feedback) from the storage function (memory or 'forgetting').

Between perception (and immediate erasure) and the Unconscious (unlimited storage), Freud comes close to specifying the machine requirements for an input/processing/output system. The input would be our 'classical' model of film theory and psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on vision, the gaze and the mirror phase; or, put more generally, with its stress on all forms of input that have a mirroring or duplication function, and thus refer to our feedback loops with the environment, including our relations self–other, as well as our forms of (self)consciousness, identity and identification. The storage part would be the Unconscious, which retains the 'memory traces', while remaining open for new 'impressions'. The processing part, or 'programme', would be the psychoanalytic-therapeutic process, the 'talking cure' itself, understood as the combination of free association and what Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* called 'work' (data recalled across the different

20 Ibid., p. 167.

21 See Thomas Elsaesser (ed.), *Early Cinema: Space Frame Narrative* (London: British Film Institute, 1990).

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rhetorics of the Unconscious and its logico-linguistic operations, such as condensation, displacement, the interface of representability, and so on) to which the analyst applies the techniques of translation and transcription, or verbalization and visualization.

Since the two functions of perception and memory for Freud come together only in the virtual space which is the Unconscious, cinema would need to have the equivalent of a media-Unconscious, a virtual space in which its perceptual optical data (the inscription of a perceiving subject) and its mnemonic trace (the presence of an object) can come together. Until now, theories of cinema have tended to oscillate between these two possibilities, either privileging perception and the spectator in semiotic and psychosemiotic theories, or privileging the object and its material traces in realist, materialist or 'ontological' theories. Perhaps one of the many seductions that Deleuze's theory of the cinema has for us today is that it seems simultaneously to sidestep these alternatives and, with its 'the brain is the screen' formula, to offer a way of understanding the cinema as both perceptual fact and material fact.[22]

But this is where Freud's conceptualization of time – if we follow Doane – would put a serious obstacle in our way. Time, for Freud, is the protective–compensatory effect of a subjective experience of intermittence, of rupture; a failure and loss of signal, even, occurring in the transition between recording and storage. The indexical–iconic data of perception cannot be joined with the data of 'time' (understood as the experience of 'narrativized' intermittence), so that time as *durée* (in Bergson's sense) is not its 'primary' state but, in the time-based arts (including cinema), divided between *chronos* (linear time) and *kairos* (the moment of recognition – *anagnorisis* – and of 'closure'). It is therefore only logical that Deleuze should not refer to Freud. And yet he might have called upon Marey rather than Bergson. For, as Doane points out, whereas Freud conceives of time as the effect of 'this discontinuous method of functioning of the system perception-consciousness' and thus as a 'subject-effect', Marey tries to capture time as pure process – as the movement of objective 'becoming' – when he devised so many different methods of recording natural phenomena, from the human heartbeat to the gallop of horses, from the phases of motion of the wings of bees and birds to the patterns of turbulence formed by air and smoke as hot and cold air come into contact with each other.

In all these phenomena, Marey attempted to let movement and motion, vibration and oscillation, 'write' themselves without the intervention of the human hand or any kind of symbolic notation such as language. And unlike Muybridge, whose recordings of movement were generated by the intermittence of different still images sequenced one after another, Marey tried to capture movement without any 'loss' or intermittence, producing the famous blur or continuous line, by abstracting as much as possible from the plenitude of sensory data. For instance, he reduced the human body to a set of luminous dots, which yielded the familiar motion graph against a black background.[23] We might say that while Muybridge,

22 Gilles Deleuze, 'The brain is the screen: an interview with Gilles Deleuze', trans. Marie Therese Guiris, in Gregory Flaxman (ed.), *The Brain is the Screen* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

23 On Marey, see Marta Braun, *Picturing Time: the Work of Etienne-Jules Marey, 1830– 1904* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

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as a photographer and artist, strove to use chronophotography as a means of 'Gestalt recognition', Marey's method as a scientist was closer to 'pattern recognition'. But as Doane also notes, Marey's attempts to capture movement as a full continuum, and thus to record time without intermittence, were as much haunted by failure as was Freud's attempt to imagine an apparatus that could combine Perception-Consciousness with memory-trace recall without inventing 'repression', the 'Unconscious' and the hermeneutics of 'dreamwork'.

Doane's previous books, such as *The Desire to Desire* and *Femmes Fatales*, have been required reading in film theory classes all over the world.[24] A question that thus might arise is how and where her work in feminist film theory and on female subjectivity intersects with this interest in early cinema, and even precinema. One possible answer could be sought by returning to the origins of psychoanalysis and the fact that – as all feminists have noticed – Freud's initial patients and the subjects of his first case histories were predominantly women. In Doane's analysis of the representation of psychoanalysis in Hollywood cinema, one of the strongest motifs is the medicalization of femininity, and the inevitable erotic entanglements ('transference') between doctor and patient that seem to accompany the representation of psychoanalytic therapy – as if female subjectivity itself were the pathology that psychoanalysis set out to cure, for the benefit of patriarchy.

Against this medicalization of women in mainstream Hollywood, our combined efforts to present Freud as a media theorist might allow us to rework this trope once more by suggesting that Freud can also be understood as having not so much medicalized female subjectivity as 'medialized' women. This is one of the abiding subjects of a third thinker who has commented extensively on the 'Mystic writing-pad', but whom I want, by way of conclusion, to introduce in the context of yet another possible, but unlikely, contemporary of Freud. The commentator is Friedrich Kittler, and the perhaps unexpected contemporary is Bram Stoker's Dracula. Since, there is no need to highlight the abiding affinity of cinema with the Dracula figure as the archetypal embodiment of the uncanny undeadness and inbetweenness of cinematic life and its preservation, reanimation or storage, I want to draw attention to Kittler's take on *Dracula*, Bram Stoker's 1897 novel, rather than, say, F.W. Murnau's film *Nosferatu* (1921). Kittler reads the novel as a commentary on the media origins of psychoanalysis at just about the same time as its principles and first therapeutic practices were being formulated by Freud. For Kittler, Dracula is a creature driven not by desire but by some other force and energy: that of a technical media revolution, as it has impacted the domains of information and communication. As such, the Count may be the only original and authentic myth that the age of mechanical reproduction has produced; so that Dracula stands for the eternal repetition of mechanical inscription (*die endlose Wiederholung durch automatische Aufzeichnung* [25]) which

24 Mary Ann Doane, *The Desire to Desire: the Woman's Film of the 1940s* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987); *Femmes Fatales: Feminism, Film Theory, Psychoanalysis* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1991).

25 Friedrich Kittler, *Draculas Vermächtnis* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1993), p. 12; translation in John Johnston (ed.), *Literature, Media, Information Systems: Essays* (Amsterdam: G+B Arts, 1997), pp. 50–85.

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has entered the western world with the typewriter, the gramophone/ phonograph and the cinema.

Apart from his book *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, Kittler is best known for a work called *Aufschreibsysteme 1800*, translated into English as *Discourse Networks*, in which he presents a reading of German Romantic poetry as the consequence of new media technologies, notably the widespread alphabetization undertaken by Prussian school reform.[26] This put woman at the centre of a double regime: in the figure of the mother she inducted the male child into discovering, through silent reading, a new form of inwardness and subjectivity; and in the figure of the female reader she helped create the artist–poet, with his pen as the embodiment of a form of masculinity that impregnates and engenders through paper and ink, and by extension through writing and print. Kittler's thesis is that literature as we know it in the modern age is the result of the coming together of two technologies and a universalizing educational discourse: the postal system had to be joined to the printing press, and the literate mother had to be joined to public education.

In Kittler's analysis, feminist film theory finds itself differently historicized and given an ideological function beyond the emphasis on specularity, vision and the male gaze. By extension, the novel *Dracula* tells the story of how women themselves become media, how their susceptibility and sensitivity is, in the middle of the nineteenth century, discovered as a resource and a raw material. Charcot, Janet, Breuer, Freud: for Kittler they all line up as men who 'harvest' the mediatic powers of women; and it is Stoker who calls their bluff, as it were, because he exposes the patriarchal mechanisms underlying their psycho-physiological analysis, while at the same time his narrative offers the imaginary solution that allows Victorian/western society to live with this shocking realization and its real contradictions. In the contrasting and complementary figures of Wilhelmina (Mina) and Lucy, and in the descriptions of their symptoms, Stoker makes hysteria, paranoia and somnambulism appear as embodiments of electromagnetism and the human equivalents of wireless transmission.

Stoker was no doubt aware that Marconi had patented his wireless telegraphy system in 1896, even if he could not have known that in 1898 Marconi would successfully transmit radio signals across the English Channel. On the journey back to Transylvania in pursuit of Dracula, Mina serves the men as both medium and messenger: that is, thanks to her vampiric contact with Dracula, she is able to receive the transmissions emanating from him on the high seas and on land, helping to track his (global) position. Being familiar with a technically advanced symbolic encoding device, the typewriter, she records the 'messages' sent by Dracula as they travel to the Carpathian mountains, acting as a kind of moving (wireless) receiver *and* recorder. As Kittler drily remarks, in the 1890s women had just two choices: to become either hysterics or typists. Mina, after the demise of Lucy, is both.

26 Friedrich Kittler, *Discourse Networks*, trans. Michael Metteer, with Chris Cullens (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990).

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Psychoanalysis and cinema, it would seem, were born together but have been on a collision course ever since. Or rather, they compete with each other, and in the process produce the famous 'excess' or surplus that, in various formulas (from 'woman as excess' in musicals, film noir and melodrama, to violence as special effect, body horror and pornography) with which film studies, too, has been trying to come to grips. Psychoanalysis and cinema are thus the enemies and rivals, who – in accordance with the double negative of 'my enemy's enemy is my friend' – nonetheless come together at the close of the nineteenth century, in order to put an end to literature and the literary author.[27]

27 See Kittler, *Draculas Vermächtnis*, p. 96. Kittler in this respect contradicts, but also complements, Stephen Heath, 'Cinema and psychoanalysis: parallel histories', in Bergstrom (ed.), *Endless Night*, p. 46.

In Kittler's scheme of things, technological media and psychoanalysis thus compete for literature's legacy, trying to take on the various information processing tasks and cultural memory mandates that used to be literature's monopoly: the recording, storing, repeating of experience, in sounds and images, text and traces, embodied or imagined, manifest as physical symptoms or as phantom sensations. Where film and cinema (or the audiovisual media generally) accomplish such recording by mechanical means and on synthetic material supports, psychoanalysis has retained the body and the voice as its 'natural' material support. Yet it, too, tries to 'automate' the recording process as much as possible through free association and the seemingly esoteric, but strictly controlled, body of techniques that make up 'analysis'.

In three different epochs, then, women have been crucial in 'naturalizing' a new media technology as well as problematizing its effects on gender relations. If, around 1800, women were essential to the idea of literature as a profession and an autonomous practice, it was the female body and voice that introduced and 'naturalized' cinema around 1900 (if we can accept the reading of Stoker's *Dracula* as an allegorical prefiguration of audiovisual media). The question with which this leaves us is whether, around 2000, a return to Freud – now as media theorist rather than medical therapist – can tell us something about the 'Unconscious' of our current media technologies. In the emphasis on such traditional attributes of the female mind as 'parallel processing', 'distributed attention' or 'collaborative intelligence', the digital media may find themselves naturalized by virtue of being 'feminized': perhaps in order to keep at bay – and to control – another form of the undeadness of data, the 'too much' of stimuli that threatens the very possibility of perception and comprehension, and thus the very manageability of processing.

Where, then, one is tempted to ask, is the Freud of the twenty-first century who tells us about the 'Unconscious' appropriate to the information media age? To encourage us to think about this further, I shall end with a quotation from Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* that uncannily predicts one of our current predicaments: that our senses are mere 'samplers' of data. 'It is characteristic of [the sense organs] that they assimilate only very small quantities of the outer stimulus, and take in only samples of the outer world; one might compare them to antennae

28 Freud, 'Beyond the pleasure
principle', p. 153.

which touch at the outer world and then constantly withdraw from it
again.'[28] Freud the media theorist may turn out to be someone who
increasingly speaks to our age – even to some for whom psychoanalysis
now appears so discredited.

For if media archaeology is ready to step into the breach that has
opened up between a film history (or a television history) that is no longer
credible for the twentieth century and a media anthropology that is not
yet feasible for the 'media convergences' or even the 'amediality' of the
twenty-first century, then a figure such as Sigmund Freud – precisely
because of his 'negative epistemology' about technical media and his
sceptical insistence on persistent problems of memory in relation to
consciousness and communication – can stand as a milestone and a
marker on a road that is neither direct nor linear in either temporal
succession or topological extension.

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The post-medium condition and the explosion of cinema

JI-HOON KIM

1 Besides her provocative pamphlet-size book entitled '*A Voyage on the North Sea': Art in the Age of the Post-medium Condition* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000), Krauss's body of work includes the following: '"... And then turn away?": an essay on James Coleman', *October*, no. 81 (1997), pp. 5–33; 'Reinventing the medium', *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 25, no. 2 (1999), pp. 289–305; '"The rock": William Kentridge's drawing for projection', *October*, no. 92 (2000), pp. 3–35.

2 Krauss, 'Reinventing the medium', p. 296.

3 Krauss, '*A Voyage on the North Sea*', p. 26.

In a series of articles since the mid 1990s, the renowned art critic Rosalind Krauss has striven to maintain the legitimacy of medium specificity and of the notion of medium *as such* in order to individuate forms of artistic practice in the contemporary new media environment.[1] Her critical reexamination of medium specificity was initially launched in the realm of a contemporary art criticism that has been confronted with the pervasive power of electronic and digital media to challenge the concepts of a medium and its specificity in the name of convergence. Her response is to redefine a medium as 'a set of conventions derived from (but not identical to) the material conditions of a given technical support',[2] suggesting that the medium is not reducible to its physical properties. Krauss eschews a Greenbergian notion of medium specificity, according to which a medium's distinct identity is circumscribed by its unique and proper artistic territory. She does so by resuscitating the idea of a medium as a 'supporting structure' marshaled by 'expressive possibilities or conventions'.[3] On the one hand, Krauss reaffirms the salience of the material support on which the modernist idea of medium specificity rests. On the other, she avoids any direct association between the medium and its physical characteristics, and instead highlights the significance of certain artistic expressions which call into question the effect of a medium's constraints and thereby reconfigure it as an open field for the interplay of 'conventions' and 'possibilities'. Hence her notion of a medium as a 'supporting structure' reconciles the requirement for the material and technical specificity of a distinct medium with the formal and conceptual diversity of artistic creation.

4   Mary Ann Doane, 'The indexical and the concept of medium specificity', *Differences: a Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1 (2007), special issue 'Indexicality: trace and sign', p. 130.

5   Ibid., p. 131.

6   Ibid., p. 143.

7   See, for instance, Sylvia Harvey, 'What is cinema? The sensuous, the abstract and the political', in Christopher Williams (ed.), *Cinema: the Beginnings and the Future* (London: University of Westminster Press, 1996), pp. 228–52; D.N. Rodowick, *Reading the Figural, or, Philosophy after the New Media* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 211–12; Paul Willemen, 'Reflections on digital imagery: of mice and men', in Martin Lieser and Andrea Zapp (eds), *New Screen Media: Cinema/Art/ Narrative* (London: British Film Institute and ZKM, 2002), pp. 13–26.

8   Krauss, '"The rock"', p. 33.

9   See Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, enlarged edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

10 D.N. Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 84.

Critical attention to Krauss's term 'post-medium condition' and the arguments which support it has been paid by two influential film theorists who have refashioned the question of cinema's medium specificity in the context of the rise of digital media. Mary Ann Doane reads Krauss's notion of medium specificity in terms of a dialectics between positivity and negativity afforded by the medium's material constraints: 'A medium is a medium by virtue of both its positive qualities (visibility, color, texture of paint, for instance) and its limitations, gaps, incompletions (the flatness of the canvas, the finite enclosure insured by the frame)'.[4] For Doane, the indexicality of cinema – associated with the analogical relationship of image and referent – does more than differentiate it from other art forms; the indexical in the cinema bears the inextricability of the medium – film's chemical and photographic base – as well as the possibility for 'a transgression of what are given as material limitations'.[5] In this respect, digital media are viewed as an increasing threat to the restraints and the possibilities previously guaranteed by the properties of celluloid medium inasmuch as they 'exude a fantasy of immateriality'.[6] It is not difficult to hear in Doane's lament the echoes of numerous critics and theorists who have announced the 'death of cinema' since its hundredth anniversary in the context of the rapid proliferation of the digital at all stages of cinematic practice, from production to exhibition.[7] Krauss herself has acknowledged that 'the death knell that currently rings on all sides, as film is either infiltrated or replaced by digital technologies, signals its ever rapid slide into obsolescence'.[8] And yet it remains to be seen how the indexical characteristics of film redefine and expand the formal limits of cinema through certain artistic endeavours, even as those characteristics are increasingly regarded as obsolescent.

In this vein, D.N. Rodowick's recent book *The Virtual Life of Film* offers an avenue for considering Krauss's theory and criticism within the wider context of artistic practices that address and incorporate elements of cinematic images and technologies. Rodowick complicates the persistent demarcation between the materiality of established media – in the case of cinema, its indexical properties – and the immaterial and thus dubious nature of digital media. He reconsiders cinematic specificity by drawing on Stanley Cavell's ontology. For Cavell, the ontology of film does not consist solely of the image's counterfactual reliance upon its referent: film, he argues, is a 'composite' medium insofar as its technical elements are interdependently stitched together by its 'automatisms' – transcription, succession and projection.[9] Cavell's definition of film allows Rodowick to conceive the notion of medium as 'a horizon of potentialities . . . sensitive to the historical variability of [the automatisms'] technological elements and to the responsiveness of those elements to often-unforeseen aesthetic purposes'.[10] As such, the composite nature of the cinematic apparatus shapes the specificity of cinematic arts and experiences, allowing cinema to be renewed through its exchange with its neighbouring media, whilst maintaining its analogical devotion to the physical world. In this sense, Rodowick's

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notion of the medium as a 'set of potentialities' largely corresponds to Krauss's idea of the 'supporting structure' for the 'expressive possibilities or conventions' that the constitutive heterogeneity of electronic and digital media has increasingly eclipsed.

Doane's and Rodowick's engagements with Krauss's criticism underscore two notable ways in which contemporary cinema studies reclaims arguments on behalf of medium specificity: firstly, both Doane and Rodowick reassert the irreducible materiality of the filmic medium as relatively 'old', and more and more displaced by digitization conceived as 'new'; and secondly, unlike previous arguments for medium specificity on the grounds of a medium's purity and fixity, they rearticulate the cinematic apparatus as open-ended, multilayered and historically conditioned. A more careful investigation of Krauss's discussion about the medium of film will clarify these two points.

Like Rodowick's rereading of Cavell's ontology, Krauss's idea of the cinematic apparatus derives from its 'aggregative' condition in which 'medium specificity is still maintained and at the same time internally differentiated' according to the heterogeneity and interdependence of its components: film consists of the celluloid strip, the camera that registers light on the strip, the projector which sets the recorded image into motion, and the screen. As an artistic medium, it cannot be reduced to any of the elements as objects, but all of them are united to constitute its apparatus.[11] Adopting certain phenomenological formulations from Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, Krauss goes on to argue that structural film – particularly Michael Snow's *Wavelength* (1966–67) and Richard Serra's film work – did more than manifest the modernist idea of film's self-reflexivity. It also suggested how film can be reconfigured not as a stable art object to be viewed, but as a dynamic process constituted by interdependence between the perceiving subject and the perceived object (what she calls the 'phenomenological vectors'[12]). In these experiments, the material and technical conditions of film as a medium were maintained and scrutinized, but in a manner predicated upon altering or recombining different units within the filmic apparatus, which investigated the relationship between spectator and its operation. Here the concept of the medium is redesigned as interlocking and open, and its specificity found in 'its condition as self-differing'.[13] In this sense, cinema is meant to be the last modernist medium to confirm and simultaneously implode the idea of the medium as a coherent physical substance for creating artistic forms and examining their effects.

For Krauss, film as a dynamic and multifaceted medium is increasingly recognized as obsolete in the context of the 'international fashion of installation and intermedia work' that is founded on television and video both existing 'in endlessly diverse forms, spaces, and temporalities' and occupying 'a heterogeneity of activities'.[14] This argument is also grounded in the observation that celluloid-based media – both photography and film – having lost their dominance as an industrial mass practice, have already entered the twilight zone. Thus it

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comes as no surprise that Krauss's other critical works have praised several artists who have attempted to forge their own artistic medium through confrontation with those outdated machines and the images produced by them: James Coleman's 'projected images' uncoupling the established bond between photogram and filmic moving images; Jeff Wall's conceptual photo-panels teeming with cinematic allusions; and William Kentridge's 'drawings for projection' built on the transformative amalgamation of technical remnants – precinematic optical toys, cartoon animation and handmade film. These artists are concerned with the historicity of cinematic devices, and with interrogating the material and technical properties of the old media (painting, photography and film) and their interrelationships.

A medium's own obsolescence, Krauss asserts, offers these artists the opportunity for 'reinventing the medium' by hinting at how they fabricate their expressive means, therefore demonstrating that the medium enters into 'a new relation to aesthetic production . . . that can be both projective and mnemonic'.[15] Following Walter Benjamin's notion of 'the outmoded', she argues that this reinvention embodies 'redemptive' potentialities that a medium can acquire only when it loses its autonomy and popularity.[16] Maintaining her conception of medium as 'a technical support' out of which 'to develop a form of expressiveness', she is concerned that her thesis of 'reinventing the medium' should not be taken as nostalgic – or as eager to restore the traditional media. The redemptive possibilities within the 'technical support' are conceived as withstanding the impact of technology to assimilate artistic creativity and autonomy into its imperative to mass communication, if they mean to cultivate 'a plural condition that stands apart from any philosophically unified idea of Art'.[17] Seen from this perspective, the reinvention of the medium by newly adopting and investigating cinematic constituents casts into doubt a generalized history of cinema and a reified notion of its apparatus, and thereby explores new artistic methods for giving access to, and imagining, cinema's alternative pasts.

Krauss's renewed notion of medium specificity, then, brings to the current debate on the specificity of cinema two important implications: the reevaluation of film's materiality, which has largely been recognized as 'obsolete' as the 'supporting structure', and the conception of the cinematic apparatus as 'self-differing'. Nevertheless, Krauss's arguments embody shortcomings that render her notion of the 'post-medium condition' inapplicable to current artistic practices that mediate and scrutinize the material and technical complexity of cinema whilst using other apparatuses and platforms for exhibition and consumption.

The foremost limitation derives from her antipathy towards 'installation and intermedia work' in contrast to the 'self-differing' artwork. The idea of film as a composite medium, comprising the mechanical, chemical, optical, physical and psychological aspects of the cinematic apparatus, is not unique to structural film or to the work of those few artists privileged by Krauss. Her reformulation of the medium

15 Krauss, 'Reinventing the medium', p. 296.

16 On Benjamin's notion of 'the outmoded' in relation to his reading of the early history of photography, see his 'Little history of photography', in Michael W. Jennings et al. (eds), *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume II, 1927–1934* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 507–30.

17 Krauss, 'Reinventing the medium', p. 305.

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as a 'supporting structure for expressive possibilities or conventions' does not necessarily contradict diverse practices of installation which exploit and transform cinematic elements through other technical means, particularly video and digital media.

The last decade has seen the rise of 'cinematic' installations based on the interplay of previously distinct artistic expressions – film and video art – and standing somewhere between the gallery space and the film theatre. Many artists who have found their way into the space of exhibition in the course of addressing cinema – Pierre Huyghe, Douglas Gordon, Pierre Bismuth, Mark Lewis, Stan Douglas and Steve McQueen, to name just a few – adopt video as the means to lay bare the formal and ontological qualities of the filmic moving image. In one respect, the installations in question inherit and expand a strategy of avant-garde film practice in terms of its history-making, taking on 'elements of the past that are unseen and ephemeral' in order to question 'the constructed nature of narrative forms and the materiality of the film medium.'[18] In this strategy, these artists investigate filmic fragments as objects for their conceptual manipulations. In doing so, they reveal that those fragments are part of the history and language of cinema that penetrated their memory and perception.

Douglas Gordon's work, for instance, is famous for a series of techniques reminiscent of viewing and editing through the video apparatus – repetition, magnification, insertion, slowing down, fast-forward, and so forth.[19] The work focuses attention on imperceptible or peripheral details of the original film, such as the intervals or ellipses which form it but which are internally repressed by the irreversible linearity of the projection of the film strip, so that the cinematic images are freed from the narrative that sticks them together. They are thrown into a state of constant flux charged with intense movements that overwhelm normal motion at the standard speed of cinematic projection, and with an affective expression of animated objects or bodies that is too fleeting for the viewer to grasp. All of these constituents make the image cinematographic, but at the same time turn it into something other than cinematographic: a new aesthetic moving image that hovers between film and video. In Gordon's oeuvre, the material and technical dimensions of film – the photogram, the mechanism for generating movement, and other elements that form part of the language of film, namely, what Krauss has called the 'aggregative' condition – are not annihilated by the use of video. Rather, they are 'differentiated' – dissected, analyzed, halted, reanimated and reassembled – so as to serve as means of formal and conceptual expressions. Thus video does not wholly dissolve cinematic conventions into its technological heterogeneity, but serves as the 'supporting structure' through which to expand their 'self-differing' potentials.

'Cinematic' installations like Gordon's demonstrate that Krauss's persistent dichotomy between the modernist 'self-differing' condition of the structural film and the constitutive heterogeneity of 'intermedia'

18 Jeffrey Skolker, *Shadows, Specters, Shards: Making History in Avant-garde Film* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), p. xv.

19 On Gordon's work, see, for instance, Katrina M. Brown et al., *Douglas Gordon* (London: Tate Publishing, 2004); Philip Monk, *Double Cross: the Hollywood Films of Douglas Gordon* (Toronto: The Power Plant/Art Gallery of York University, 2003); Klaus Biesenbach (ed.), *Douglas Gordon: Timeline* (New York, NY: Museum of Modern Art, 2006).

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20 Here I am using this term to mean all sorts of still and moving images within the exhibition space which are based on various projection techniques, of which the most standardized format of cinematic projection is part. This usage is indebted to the following discussion: Malcolm Turvey et al., 'Round table: the projected image in contemporary art', *October*, no. 104 (2003), pp. 71–96.

21 Raymond Bellour, 'The double helix', in Timothy Druckrey (ed.), *Electronic Culture: Technology and Visual Representation* (New York, NY: Aperture, 1996), pp. 173–99.

22 Art critic Jean-Christophe Royoux also comments on the emergence of the 'gallery film' and the video work that explore cinema in terms of 'a development likely to keep reviving and renewing future modes of appropriation'. See his 'Remaking cinema', in *Cinéma Cinéma: Contemporary Art and the Cinematic Experience*, Exhibition Catalogue (Eindhoven: Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, 1999), p. 21.

23 Raymond Bellour, 'The battle of images', trans. L-S. Torgoff, in Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel (eds), *Future Cinema: the Cinematic Imaginary after Film* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), p. 56.

work prevents her theory from accounting for the various 'projected images'[20] in the gallery space that are based on various forms of installation combined with different media. Some critical or theoretical supplementation is thus necessary if one is to engage with the correspondences between cinema and other media in contemporary moving image installations and with the issues of medium specificity that they pose.

Raymond Bellour proposes two axes upon which those crossbred works can be described and theorized. On the horizontal axis lie new images produced by the exchange and collision between different media images – cinema, photography, video and the digital – that were hitherto regarded as distinct (what he calls 'passages of the image'); on the vertical axis lies a twofold historical change in the cinematic apparatus, mobilized by electronic and digital technologies (what he calls the 'double helix'): these make the apparatus go beyond its traditional formations, while absorbing those formations into their capacities for converting, storing and transmitting data.[21] For Bellour, electronic and digital artefacts to more than cause cinema to be dissolved, they simultaneously emerge as resources for the evolution of cinematic forms through which the relationship between old and new media can be reexamined.[22] Bellour's terminology does more than simply manifest the inefficacy of the Greenbergian medium-specificity argument. Unlike Krauss's exclusive category of 'self-differing' artworks, his 'passage of the image' provides a tool for articulating the interplay between diverse orders of images. The dialectical tension between old and new media, manifested in the double helix, furnishes an antidote to the modernist/postmodernist duality to which Krauss clings.

Debates on the ontological condition of cinema, in conjunction with numerous artists' and filmmakers' emigration to the gallery, demonstrate that any possibility of defining cinema according to its self-contained nature has become futile. The formal condition of cinema needs to be reconsidered in tandem with 'the thousand and one ways to show moving images in the vague and misnomered domain known as Art'.[23] The overlap between cinematic space and exhibition space corroborates with the fact that cinema examines its own *raison d'être* and modus operandi within the space opened up by the transition between previously distinct images, not within one category of image. Bellour has coined the term *autre cinemas* for the flurry of media installations stemming from this transition:

These installations, and the forces that animate them, may seem to be the effect of the so-called 'crisis' within cinema and the difficulties of contemporary art, of which installations are probably the most vivid manifestation. But if it is difficult to assimilate these works to the tradition of the plastic arts, the very framework of which they explode, it is no less difficult to take them as belonging to traditional cinema or as a supplement of cinema; it would rather be better to continue . . . to

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recapture cinema in the historical and formal singularity of its own device. The strange force of these works is thus to open ever more clearly the indefinable expansion of an *other cinema*, according to which the conditions of an *aesthetics of confusion* are clarified and amplified. It is better to try to describe its nuances than to pretend to be able to escape them.[24]

The 'other cinema' here situates itself as a challenge to the established aesthetic norms of distinguishing one art form from another. For example, in this sort of work the screen does not have the same function of imposing on the viewer a boundary for the purity of an art, as in modernist art. Installed in the gallery, it asks the viewer to examine critically the operation of the media constituting the projected image, 'by returning the image to the fragility of its surface and letting it linger over fragments of the world and discourse about the world'.[25] More significantly, work pertaining to the 'aesthetics of confusion' aims to identify 'the historical and formal singularity' of cinema in terms of its material and technical substrates as much as to distinguish itself from cinema in its formal and conceptual expressiveness. Thus neither non-filmic devices nor exhibition space obliterates the medium specificity of cinema, but together they cast its elements in a new light. The cinematic installation achieves this by bringing cinema's 'composite' condition into other arts (painting, sculpture, performance, architecture, and so on) and their respective media as a kind of contamination. As the art critic Daniel Birnbaum notes, through the spatialized forms of the moving image projected onto the gallery that are akin to sculptural and architectural relations, today's 'cinematic art' makes visible 'what has been there all along: the impurity and heterogeneity of cinema *qua* cinema'.[26] In this sense, the 'aggregative' construction of cinema is revealed not simply by Krauss's 'self-differing' artworks and the tradition of structural film, but by work grounded in the structural and formal interrelationship between film and other artistic media.

In addition to incorporating the idea that the medium specificity of cinema has been established by what exceeds it – the influence of other art media – the gallery installation also enlarges the boundaries of cinema by differentiating its components and placing them in a new artistic horizon where they can be combined in multiple ways. For all her insightful views on the 'composite' condition of the medium, Krauss's exclusion of intermedia and installation work blocks any critical excursion into this horizon, an area which she herself, before setting out her thesis on the 'post-medium' condition, termed an 'expanded field'. The 'expanded field' refers to the way in which postmodern art opens onto multiple sets of formal possibilities in a medium rather than insisting on any singular operation.[27] What is implied in this term is that medium specificity does not dissipate into the pluralist practices of contemporary art; but rather that the qualities and uses of different media

24 Raymond Bellour, 'Of an other cinema', in Sara Arrhenius et al. (eds), *Black Box Illuminated* (Stockholm: Propexus, 2003), p. 41.

25 Fulvia Carnevale and John Kelsey, 'Art of the possible: an interview with Jacques Rancière', *Artforum*, vol. 45, no. 7 (2007), pp. 256–67.

26 Daniel Birnbaum, *Chronology* (New York, NY: Lucas and Sternberg, 2005), p. 64.

27 See Rosalind Krauss, 'Sculpture in the expanded field', *October*, no. 8 (1979), pp. 30–44.

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28 George Baker, 'Photography's expanded field', *October*, no. 114 (2005), p. 123.

29 Nicholas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simon Pleasance, Fronza Woods and Mathieu Copeland (Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 2002), pp. 14, 66.

are so expanded that they 'stand in a new, formerly unimaginable relationship to one another'.[28]

It is tempting to associate the implication of Krauss's 'expanded field' with Nicholas Bourriaud's 'relational aesthetics'. Bourriaud's notion is primarily concerned with an array of artistic forms which provide 'the realms of human interactions and their social contexts' outside the confines of representing utopian or imaginary realities. However, Bourriaud considers 'screen relations' to be an important part of this aesthetic programme. In the case of 'cinematic' video installation artists such as Gordon and Huyghe, these relations encapsulate the play of technology in forging 'models of sociability' between the material and technical features of different arts: 'It is odd that one and the same word (screen) is . . . used to describe both a surface that arrests light (in the cinema) and an interface on which information is written. This collision of meanings points to the fact that epistemological upheavals (concerning new perceptual structures) . . . are brought together around a form (the screen, the terminal) which encapsulates their various properties and potentials.'[29]

Inadvertently or not, Krauss's simple assessment of electronic and digital media as constitutively 'heterogeneous' undermines her earlier argument on the 'expanded field'. It is in this field that a larger corpus of cinematic 'intermedia' work flourishes. As claimed earlier, there is no reason why this sort of artwork contradicts Krauss's theory of a medium as the material and technical 'supporting structure'; but, in contrast to her predilection for 'obsolete' media, she excludes it from the outset. Thus her criticism brackets out any potential for investigating the relationship that makes the 'differential specificity' of a medium, such as film, become dramatized and altered by other new media to help create a new artistic form.

If 'differential specificity' is not intrinsic to Krauss's privileged artworks, including the materialist tradition of North American avant-garde film, then it becomes clear that her thesis of 'reinventing the medium' is still anchored in a belief in the uniqueness and singularity of the means of expression that is part of the modernist argument on medium specificity that she intends to renew. This limitation is reinforced by her presupposed dichotomy between modernist (self-differing) and postmodern (heterogeneous) art, a dichotomy that comes to overshadow her key notions regarding the artistic medium, such as the 'supporting structure' and 'differential specificity'. However important it is in evaluating those artworks that resist the engulfing power of communications media through articulating the 'redemptive possibilities' within outdated technologies, Krauss's overemphasis on the 'obsolescence' of traditional media results in a fossilization of the opposition between medium-specificity arguments on the one hand and those theories that disregard any notion of specificity in favour of media convergence on the other. To overcome these limitations, and to reposition the issue of medium specificity rekindled by the explosion of

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cinema within broader historical and theoretical frameworks, I would propose two possible ways in which Krauss's arguments on the 'post-medium condition' may be supplemented.

Firstly, it should be noted that Krauss's account of the 'composite' structure of the cinematic apparatus derives from the way in which she privileges the modernist tradition that treated film in self-reflexive ways, exploring the process of filmmaking and film viewing and the material formation of the medium. Consequently she overlooks the numerous recent exchanges between cinema and new technologies that have emerged since the 1960s, and thus reiterates the hypothesis of structural/materialist film that once buttressed the 'apparatus theory'. Her simplification of the genealogy can be challenged by recent scholarship in avant-garde and experimental art that has turned attention to the hybrid and expansive tendencies in European and North American art in the 1960s and 1970s. Some researchers have demonstrated that the multimedia, process-oriented (frequently involving installation formats and performance-based viewer participation) and cross-disciplinary nature of 'expanded cinema' came to challenge the self-reflexive projects of structural/material film by transgressing the cinematic medium's boundaries and destabilizing its parameters.[30] Jonathan Walley's study of the 'paracinema' of those decades, emblematized by the work of Anthony McCall, Paul Sharits and Ken Jacobs, for instance, offers a valuable approach to an 'idea of cinema' in which cinematic properties outside the standard film apparatus served to defy the premiss that cinema's unique territory must belong to the material constitution of film.[31] These studies have contributed to the unraveling of an array of often overlapping avant-garde movements which had deconstructed the cinematic apparatus at all its levels – minimalism, postminimalism, conceptual art, happenings, fluxus, cybernetic art, and so forth. Crucial to deepening Krauss's arguments is a reevaluation of those various experiments that intended to highlight the 'aggregative' condition of cinematic apparatus and extend its components into the 'phenomenological vectors' where the embodiment of the viewer could be examined and mobilized by the parameters of space. This task is also meaningful in tracing the prehistory of digitally expanded cinema in various media festivals. Such an experiment encourages the viewer to reconsider the material and technical specificity of cinematic components, and sets out to disentangle them from the traditional cinematic viewing position.

Secondly, Krauss's theory assumes that the 'self-differing' specificity of a medium comes to wane in the 'post-medium' age as electronic and digital devices have eroded the physical properties of the medium. However, the 'differential condition' of the medium, under which it involves 'interlocking supports and layered conventions', holds true not simply for film, as Krauss asserts, but also for new media, particularly digital media. For the digital can also be conceived as 'self-differing' inasmuch as it is based on 'the aggregation of a set of autonomous

30 See, for instance, Chrissie Iles, 'Between still and moving image', in Iles (ed.), *Into the Light: the Projected Image in American Art 1964–1977* (New York, NY: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2001), pp. 32–69; Liz Kotz, 'Disciplining expanded cinema', in Matthias Michalka (ed.), *X-Screen: Film Installations and Actions in the 1960s and 1970s* (Cologne: Verlag de Buchhandlung Walther König, 2003), pp. 44–53; Jackie Hatfield, 'Expanded cinema and its relationship to the avant-garde', *Millennium Film Journal*, nos 39/40 (2003), pp. 51–65.

31 Jonathan Walley, 'The material of film and the idea of cinema: contrasting practices in sixties and seventies avant-garde film', *October*, no. 103 (2003), pp. 15–30.

32 Mark B.N. Hansen, *New Philosophy for New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), p. 24.

33 This point has been made by Lev Manovich and Peter Weibel, two influential new media theorists and practitioners who have reflected on the new conditions of artistic media afforded by digitization. Their argument can be read as indirectly tackling Krauss's notion of 'self-differing' specificity from the standpoint of media theory and criticism, inasmuch as both authors use the same rubric 'post-media'. See Manovich, 'Post-media aesthetics', in Jill Bennett (ed.), *(dis) Locations* (Karlsruhe: ZKM and Hatje Canze, 2001), pp. 10–21; Weibel, 'The postmedia condition', paper given at the Postmedia Condition exhibition, MediaLabMadrid, Madrid, 7 February–2 April 2006, http://black.fri.uni-lj.si/forum/viewtopic.php?t=163 [accessed 21 May 2008].

34 Krauss, *A Voyage on the North Sea*, p. 56. See also Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern, 1983–1998* (New York, NY and London: Verso, 1998), pp. 100–102.

fragments' that are completely available and influence each other under the computerized model of artistic creation.[32] A quick glimpse of a computer reveals that it is composed of a variety of objects and techniques, including those of traditional media, simulated by numerical codes and combined by programming algorithms in putatively limitless ways.[33] Thus it is not sufficient to say that the computer is not a medium in the sense that it does not have a distinct physical substance and delimited effects. Its constituents – hardware, software, data objects, algorithms and user interfaces – are 'internally differentiated', but remain interdependent according to its automated and symbolic operation. If this is the case, we might go so far as to argue that computer could be deemed as a 'supporting structure' bearing 'expressive possibilities' or 'a set of conventions'.

We can ask, then, why Krauss insists on applying her thesis on 'reinventing the medium' to traditional media that are passing into obsolescence. In fact at the end of *'A Voyage on the North Sea'* she rehearses Fredric Jameson's critique of postmodern media culture in order to emphasize the 'redemptive possibilities' of 'differential specificity' incorporated by her privileged artists: 'This complete image-permeation of social and daily life means, Jameson says, that aesthetic experience is now everywhere, in an expansion of culture that has not only made the notion of an individual work of art wholly problematic, but has also emptied out the very concept of aesthetic autonomy'.[34] Krauss's dependence on Jameson leads us to read her theory as reconfiguring the notion of a medium as a matter or physical substance that lends itself to the artist's autonomous expression. However, there is no reason why this notion should be viable only in opposition to the 'intermedia and installation work' that Krauss accuses of capitalizing on new media. The definitional polarity between the 'medium' as the resource for artistic expression and the 'media' as technological means of communication and culture, within which Krauss's renewed theorization of medium specificity is still circumscribed, is prone to overlook a variety of cinematic experiments spawned by the availability of all media in the computerized environment. To the extent that they are able to probe deeply the broader nature of the cinematic experience through positing new associations between previously distinct media images and forms, these experiments are particularly important in rethinking the issue of cinematic medium specificity. Seen from this perspective, Krauss's notion of 'differential specificity' *vis-à-vis* a medium as the 'supporting structure' cannot take on full relevance in accounting for the explosion of cinema beyond its established forms; that is, not unless she embraces the 'expressive possibilities' afforded by the dynamic exchange between the components of film and those of video and digital media.

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On documentary sounds and images in the gallery

ELIZABETH COWIE

Cinema and broadcast television are no longer preeminent as modes of exhibition and consumption of moving-image and time-based works, while the gallery has long ceased to be the preserve of the still and silent image. Instead, other new forms have emerged along with the digital, such as YouTube and podcasts, while the mobile phone with its still and video camera creates audiovisual connectivity and interaction anytime and anywhere. Time-based works have become multiplatform, as filmmakers produce works for the gallery and web, and visual artists make works for the cinema, such as Turner Prize winner Steve McQueen's film *Hunger*, awarded the 2008 Cannes *Caméra d'Or*. The emergence in the 1960s of the term 'time-based art' itself marked the advent of moving images and sounds in the gallery as video art and distinct from avant-garde film. This incursion into the gallery brought the audiovisual into the place and space of 'art', thereby questioning the extent to which the experience of art arises not only in relation to the specificity of the medium of representation but also in relation to the site, the space and the duration of its presentation and viewing. The digital has transformed the medium specificity which had been central to video art as videotape viewable on a small monitor. But in its gallery exhibition the digital remains specific: for each place of viewing a time-based installation is not only a context – geographical and social, public or private – but also an architectural space, organizing the spectator's access to mobility and stillness.

1 For example, the exhibition Archive Fever, held in New York in January 2008 at the International Centre of Photography, was subtitled 'Uses of the document in contemporary art', and presented video works alongside still photographic series.

Documentary has long been present in the gallery and museum, both as photography and as conceptual art – for example, Mary Kelly's major work *Post-Partum Document* (1973–78) – but now documentary film and video are encountered in the gallery as installation, outside the confines of the museum's cinema auditorium. This essay addresses the new questions concerning the spectator that now arise, and their importance specifically for documentary in the gallery.[1] The documentary installation may consist of found film re-presented in, and constituting the material object of, the artwork – such as Douglas Gordon's video loop, *10ms-1* (1994) – or reality recorded specifically for the artwork; but in either case something of the real of reality is introduced into the gallery that is specific to film and digital video as time-based media. This real is the reality recorded as well as what is implied by what is seen and shown, namely, the ongoing time and space of the events, persons and places offscreen, but which we can imaginatively construct or infer. The documentary as an organized presentation of recorded reality is never merely the factual but is always also a space for the imagined. There is a further real here, however, of an unrepresented that is unrepresentable; a real that cannot be imagined as a pictured scene or a piece of knowledge, but which bears on the viewing subject as that which always escapes representation. Freud called this the uncanny, that which catches us unawares and undoes the sense and sensibleness of lived or represented reality; while Lacan termed it the real, in his tripartite scheme of the real, the imaginary and the symbolic.

The space of viewing is also a place of time, both of the artwork's temporality and of the spectator's time as an experience of duration and change which engages her in a work of memory. The spectator is both a subject of imagination and an embodied subject. What distinguishes the video and film installation from other gallery media such as painting and sculpture, but also from film and video projected in a cinema, is the way it demands – and performs – a new positioning of audio-spectatorship, of encountering the sounds and images. In the gallery the audio-spectator is mobile, perhaps just passing through, physically engaged by and traversing a space that has been designed for her movement in and around it, perhaps staying two minutes or ten minutes. In any event, both the space and the time of spectatorship of time-based works are transformed.[2]

2 In cinema, too, the embodied experience of spectatorship has changed with the development of surround sound, which introduces the space behind and beside the (still immobile) spectator audially.

Each gallery installation may produce a new mode of experiencing a work, not only through differences of aspect and setting, but also because the work itself may not have a fixed form: it might be shown on monitors on a pedestal, or on a plasma screen, or viewed on wall-mounted boxes, or on a series of television sets. Each mode implies variations of scale, as well as determining the spectator's spatial relation to the work. Works may involve double projection, or several screens adjacent to or opposite each other, or a combination of a large screen with a smaller monitor or series of monitors. Margaret Morse has pointed to this performance of time-based work in space as painterly or sculptural, but it is also

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architectural in terms of the spatial volume in which the work appears, and of its transformation of the space it occupies by its formal elements (moving light, sounds and form of projection) and of the performance of space it produces in the trajectory of movements it enjoins on the spectator.[3] The gallery installation invokes a mobile spectator in a specific historical space and time.

Documentary as installation in the gallery disturbs the categories of both 'art' and 'documentary'. The 'artness' of the work is in jeopardy not only because the referent is indexically traced, but also insofar as it signifies – culturally and politically – independently of the aesthetic form. At the same time, the role of documentary as simply referential, as information and as record, is problematized. For it is in its facticity or factness that documentary is an art object, and thereby engages us to reflect on the possibilities and impossibilities of knowing reality really, and on the construction of our audiovisual discourses of knowledge. The 'presentationalism' of documentary in the gallery informs the spectator of a historical reality while confronting her with the question of its very constitution as available to knowledge, and with an excess in reality never fully grasped by the documentary narration. As Michael Renov has suggested, what is involved is the 'discovery of the unanticipated . . . that wrenches the image free of its purely preservational moorings', producing what he calls a 'visual epiphany' which may be an experience of the beautiful, and the uncanny.[4] It is, to draw on Lacan's account, the point when a chasm in represented reality suddenly opens; when the real of the unrepresentable is made palpable. This may be found, or it might arise in conjunction with the deployment of a formal aesthetics; but in either case the factness, the materiality of reality, is encountered differently – as no longer a given.

Documentary in the gallery references both documentary as a form and the issues of its reception and encounter; but it also references the recorded reality presented – that is, 'lived life told' for us in a now-time now past. For his major work *Kuba* (2005), Kutlug Ataman spent nearly three years filming interviews with men, women and children for whom the shanty town of Kuba, in Turkey, was home.[5] Its aesthetic echoes that of Wendy Clarke in her *Love Tapes*,[6] with the participants in medium closeup addressing the camera. But Kutlug has not edited these together: instead he presents them on forty separate, and somewhat vintage, television sets. Taking a seat in an armchair to view the television, as if in our own living room, we become absorbed by the teller, and the story told – whether of the trauma, or of the ordinariness, of events that are summoned before us by the words of the person we see and listen to. The visitor moves between the forty arrayed screens to a particular television, and specific story: each time the same kind of encounter, but each time a different telling of a different story. Seeing the same difference and a new difference each time, she creates her own edited version of these stories as she moves from chair to chair; while, as a corpus, the work engages us in an awareness of the community of people and their stories, individual

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7 Boris Groys, 'On the new', http://www.uoc.edu/artnodes/eng/art/groys1002/groys1002.html, p. 5 [accessed 24 August 2008].

8 Jessica Morgan, 'Time after time', in *Time Zones: Recent Film and Video* (London: Tate Publishing, 2004), p. 22. Morgan co-curated Time Zones, Tate Modern, 6 October 2004–2 January 2005. Morgan here draws on Boris Groys's discussion, 'On the aesthetics of video installations', in *Stan Douglas*, Exhibition Catalogue (Basel: Kustalle Basel, 2001).

yet also – massed in the room – cultural and collective. Each recorded account is documentary, while it is the staging of these as a corpus, and not as a series or in juxtaposition, which constitutes the artwork and confronts us with a newness.

Each installation of *Kuba* has been site specific: at the Carnegie Museum, for example, but also in a courtroom (in Southampton) and a derelict postal sorting office (in London), where the everyday reality of each now also becomes a space of recognizable non-reality. The work is 'museumized', and the museum becomes an anywhere-at-all space while nevertheless functioning as the 'symbolic windows, opening up a view on the infinite outside' that Boris Groys sees as part of the museum's task for the new.[7] Digital art as multi-platform similarly 'museumizes' its modes of reception.

Kuba's forty screens, however, cannot be seen and heard in a single visit. The gallery visitor may view only part of the documentary installation, or might commence her spectatorship halfway through a looped work. Or she might see the end before the beginning; or, having sampled a few seconds, may move on to another work then return to view again, producing a montage of spectating which exceeds the single work. As a result, there is an undermining of Aristotelian narrativity and its logic of time as causality in the loss of any privileged 'before' which produces an 'after' in the video installation, where the use of repetition, slowed motion and the loop form marks the concern of artists to challenge time as causality. The use of multiple screens produces a work which is inherently unstable, unavailable as identically repeatable, as each spectator engages uniquely in ordering her attention and gaze between the screens and sounds. As a result, experience-as-duration comes to the fore in the apprehension of the work, for it can be neither 'taken in' at a glance nor reveal itself to our concentrated gaze. It is this instability, and its attendant demand on the spectator, with which time-based installation artists engage us. Moreover, in contrast to painting or sculpture, the video work's movement in time makes us 'victims of its timing'.[8] For if we turn away for a moment we will miss something, and can never be quite sure what was missed as we stay to view again, so that our knowledge of the projected video work will be partial, and our understanding remain incomplete. All time-based works potentially give rise to the anxiety of the unremembered or missed, or misremembered; but for the video installation this potential is itself an aspect of its process and effect as art.

The spectator of the gallery installation is mobile, interacting with the work and the spatial relation imposed – or proffered – as she moves through the brightly-lit spaces that constitute a public sphere as a place of action. Cinema and television, however, are viewed from the fixed position of a cinema seat or the sofa of one's own home. Absorbed in the movement of events and actions of film and television, the spectator is immersed in their fictions and assumed to be a merely passive viewer receiving the sounds and images. Is not cinema, film as such, the perfect

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9 Laura Mulvey returned to issues of spectatorship in her recent study, *Death 24 x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006). Her exploration of the pensive (from Bellour) or possessive spectator opens up new ways to consider what is always necessarily the intrinsically doubled nature of our engagement as spectators.

10 Morgan, 'Time after time', p. 23. It was the possibility of such 'pathos and entertainment' that also attracted many artists and, especially, surrealists to cinema.

11 Laura Mulvey, 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 3 (1975), pp. 6–18.

12 Scott Weiland 'Sense, memory and media', presented to The Media Ecology Association, NYU, June 2001: http://www.digitalartsource.com/content/featur/feat17/feat17pl.htm [accessed 24 August 2008].

13 Grau characterizes all representation as 'virtual art' and argues that 'In virtual reality, a panoramic view is joined by sensorimotor exploraton of an image space that gives the impression of a "living" environment. Interactive media have changed our idea of the image into one of a multi-sensory interactive space.' Oliver Grau, *Virtual Art: from Illusion to Immersion*, trans. Gloria Custance (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), p. 7.

fetish object – enclosed and complete? And yet there can be no simple dichotomy here, for the fetishizing spectator (or the possessive spectator, as Laura Mulvey has more recently described her[9]) is as easily found in the gallery or museum as in the cinema.

The view of cinema as a medium of 'pacification' of the masses emerged in discussions of film as the new popular art form early in the twentieth century. This was articulated as an opposition between the distraction of the masses by film on the one hand, and the absorption produced by the 'true' artwork on the other; and such an approach continues to be implicit in discussions of gallery time-based work, whether documentary or fiction. Curator Jessica Morgan, for example, describes the use of found film by artists such as Stan Douglas and Douglas Gordon as decontextualizing and deconstructing, enabling 'the audience to analyse and dissect film in an environment free from the pathos and entertainment of the cinematic space'.[10] Of course, as Mulvey in her groundbreaking 1975 *Screen* essay, 'Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', observed, 'The first blow against the monolithic accumulation of traditional film conventions' necessary 'to free the look of the camera in its materiality in time and space and the look of the audience into dialectics and passionate detachment' had already been undertaken by radical filmmakers.[11] Current discussions of immersion versus interactivity in relation to the digital artwork maintain the assumption of opposing modes of spectatorship, though now seeing these as existing on a continuum, from a self-conscious intellectual reflexivity 'uninhibited by the digital effect', to an interactivity whereby the viewer is involved in, and is mentally engaged by, the work's unfolding, to the immersive where the viewer's aesthetic sensibility is displaced by the constant and varying 'stimuli entering her working memory'.[12]

Oliver Grau, however, has argued that immersion does not arise just with the digital but has long been an aspect of the experience of art and representation;[13] and in the public space of the gallery the spectator can become engaged in a private experience of the artwork before which she is halted, her attention held, absorbed, by it. The immersive is always a very active sensory engagement and one which is never merely responsive or habitual; for it is always open to a becoming other, to a newness, as immersion gives way – as it always must – to reflection.

In documentary, too, the otherworldliness of film – as oneiric, fantasmatic – is always present, however implicitly; for it 'happens' over *there*, in the specular space onscreen. Documentary engages us in the fantasy of knowing reality really, as a mastering; so that the terror of the 9/11 destruction of New York's Twin Towers can become 'tamed', for example, by the documentary that demonstrates how and why the towers were structurally susceptible to collapse and thus contributed to the devastating loss of life. Documentary can also involve us in a certain paranoia when showing the world at risk, or controlled in ways that we may deem oppressive and harmful; and the radical documentary that

presents scenarios of victimhood enforced or overcome references both reality and the real of hope or despair.

The multiscreen documentary installation in the gallery engages the spectator both as immersed, open to the oneiric, and as interactive – her attention split (or distributed[14]) between two or more possible views and across multiple channels of information and affect, formal and sensory. This produces an embodied experience in space that breaks the linearity of the single-screen film, disabling the repetitive return to fixed scenarios and its facts, now suspended from a cause–effect ordering and made strange. It is the viewing subject who authors the work's time in a process of memory and identification in her attention and encounter, with the attendant anxieties and jubilation. The single-screen documentary essay, too (as in the films of Chris Marker), by subjecting the spectator to its ordering yet failing to offer a unified discourse, problematizes the very subjectivity of spectating. Cinema and the gallery thus each represent specific possibilities of encountering the materiality of time and image in time-based works; and each can focus the question of the subjectivity of our encounter as a movement of attention *and* distraction. For as Andrew Benjamin emphasizes, 'Distraction involves fragility. It is never absolute. The subject is drawn across positions. Edges fray. Distraction is a form of ambivalence, one that presages another possibility.'[15]

In his key essay 'The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction', Walter Benjamin discusses ways in which both distraction and attention/absorption are engaged. Addressing the question of spectatorship in relation to the new mechanical recording of film and photography, Benjamin rejected the disparaging presumption of the masses as distracted by the popular art they consumed or absorbed, becoming immersed; as against the concentration, the becoming absorbed by, the work of art marked as auratic. As an example of the distaste for film as an immersive distraction, he cites Georges Duhamel's comment, 'I can no longer think what I want to think. My thoughts have been replaced by moving images.'[16] Here concentration and absorption are seen as equivalent to the wish to think one's own thoughts, to be in control of the associations brought forth by the work and by the process of absorption. Instead, for Benjamin – as for Eisenstein – film exemplified the possibility of the shock effect, and thus of the 'new' that modern art seeks to produce, *because* it involved distraction in the continuous, but also sudden, changes of image and sound which, 'like all shocks, should be cushioned by heightened presence of mind'.[17] The shock of the new, in this view, is an encounter that is at once visceral and becomes thought.

Peter Osborne has recently explored Benjamin's view of the role of distraction in the contemplation of art: 'Art distracts and is received in distraction. ... We go to the gallery, in part, to be distracted from the cares and worries of the world. To be so distracted we must attend to the artworks on display.' And yet, he then asks,

14 Aylish Wood explores the 'distributed attention' in Mike Figgis's *Timecode* (2000) and suggests new ways to understand the possibilities of agency arising through the dispersal of attention across a temporal and narrative interface. See Wood, 'Encounters at the interface: distributed attention and digital embodiments', *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, vol. 25, no. 3 (2008), pp. 219–29.

15 Andrew Benjamin, *Walter Benjamin and History* (London: Continuum, 2005), p. 159.

16 Walter Benjamin, 'The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction', in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 238, quoting Georges Duhamel, *Scènes de la vie future* (Paris, 1930), p. 52.

17 Benjamin, 'The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction', p. 238.

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> How is art to be received in distraction without becoming simply another distraction? Alternatively, how is art to distract from distraction without losing touch with distraction, without entering another realm altogether – contemplative immersion – with no relation to other distractions and thereby becoming the vehicle of a flight from actuality, from the very temporal structure of experience which it must engage if it is to be 'contemporary' and effective?[18]

It is time which is central to understanding absorption in distraction; but Osborne rejects what he sees as Bergson's emphasis on the continuity of time in his concept of duration (*durée*). Instead, he adopts Bachelard's view that 'the dialectic of attention and distraction is a dialectics of duration', involving continuity and interruption.[19] It is indeed the possibility of *change* in the duration of our spectatorship that is of importance to the artist as well as the theorist, but thinking such 'change' and its experience continues to puzzle us. The dialectic measures time as this and now that, as given stable states transformed by their interaction. Two different ideas might be brought into play here: on the one hand the interpenetration of the 'this' and the 'that' as these are thought or apprehended as perhaps a 'folding', in Gilles Deleuze's sense;[20] and on the other the role of an interval, a stillness, a meanwhile.

Bergson had proposed that instead of time as something measured in units (hours, minutes and seconds), as a progression moment by moment in which the past falls irrevocably away from the newly-made present in the next and the next and the next, we should understand time as duration. This is time experienced by consciousness: duration is continuous, like a melody in music in which the elements are blended and experienced as a whole rather than heard as just notes. Time, however, is the division of duration into perceptible moments, it is a calibration of duration. Yet past, present and future are neither radically disjunct nor are they a continuum: rather, each is made and remade through the present experience of duration. This is undertaken through memory or recollection, distinguished as either habitual or attentive. Habitual recollection is associated with 'automatic' sensorimotor activities: we do not 'remember' how to drive a car, for example – we do it as a pragmatic series of movements. Attentive recollection, however,

> takes place as 'inner' movement or the movements of thought in time. Perception withdraws from the outer world. Instead of relating a sequence of objects on the same level of experience (. . . I drive my car . . .), a given object passes through or relates different planes or levels of recollected experience. In the first case, a sensorimotor image initiates and completes a chain of actions; in the second, an optical/acoustic image initiates a process: the attempt to make a more or less replete mental description by moving to and fro through strata of memory.'[21]

18 Peter Osborne, 'Distracted reception: time, art and technology', in Morgan, *Time Zones*, pp. 68–9.

19 Ibid., p. 69.

20 Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

21 D.N. Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), p. 89.

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Deleuze draws on these two kinds of memory in his characterization of cinema as divided between a movement-image of action and reaction and a time-image of memory. Each is distinguished by the form of interval – a term Deleuze borrows from Dziga Vertov – that is either rational or irrational. The rational interval is one where the interval dividing two spatial sections serves simultaneously as the end of the first and the beginning of the second, thereby assuring continuity in space and succession in time. It can do so because we infer and make sense of the time or space elided by the edit in terms of rules of continuity, so that the movement in the film and the movement forward in screen time and story time of the film form a moving whole, a duration from which the image, as an edit, is 'cut' from a mobile section of duration the rest of which is elided. The rational interval characterizes both classical continuity editing and Eisenstein's montage. Deleuze opposes this to the irrational interval that produces a dissociation rather than an association of images and times, a dissociation that, Rodowick suggests, is 'not a link bridging images, but an interstice between them, an unbridgeable gap whose recurrences give movement as displacements in space marked by false continuity'.[22]

22 Ibid., p. 143.

It is a juxtaposition that produces association that is not already thought, that is not organized to prompt a certain order of connection, however unsuccessfully. Rather, it is a becoming thought that is not internal to the juxtaposition but a potential, a virtuality. What is introduced by this outsideness of thinking is a series of possibilities, and thus a series of times in which these virtual possibles might be actualized – that is, become. The irrational interval no longer divides a before from an after, but suspends the spectator in a state of uncertainty where it is impossible to know or predict in advance which direction change will take. It produces an image becoming, rather than being. It thus includes a hesitation, an uncertainty and a suspense as to what might be possible, one that can never be fully resolved by the actual thought we are led to.

Where Deleuze privileges a certain remembering as against the unthought of the action-image, Nietzsche had argued for the importance of unremembering because of its role in enabling action. 'Forgetfulness is a property of all action,' he writes in *The Use and Abuse of History*, in which he poses a being that this makes possible; and contrasts this to one who cannot forget, who 'no longer believes in himself or his own existence: one who sees everything fly past in an eternal succession, and loses himself in the stream of becoming';[23] one who therefore cannot know happiness, for 'There is a degree of insomnia, of rumination, of the historical sense, through which living comes to harm and is finally destroyed, whether it is a person or a people or a culture'. Such unremembering implies both distraction and an immersion; though for Nietzsche this is in the ongoing of everyday reality, while remembering desubjectivizes. He argues therefore that both 'the unhistorical and the historical are equally essential'.[24] The documentary installation, insofar as it engages us in the unremembering 'being' of immersion, also opens

23 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, trans. Adrian Collins (New York, NY: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957), p. 6.

24 Ibid., p. 8.

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25 'What returns to haunt the victim, these stories tell us, is not only the reality of the violent event but also the reality of the way that its violence has not yet been fully known.' Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 6.

26 Walter Benjamin, 'Theses on the philosophy of history', in *Illuminations*, pp. 262–3.

27 Andrew Benjamin, 'Time and task: Benjamin and Heidegger showing the present', in Andrew Benjamin and Peter Osborne (eds), *Walter Benjamin's Philosophy: Destruction and Experience* (London: Clinamen, 2000), p. 235.

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us to the historical of memory. In this movement can emerge a cognisance of an unrememberable, of a traumatic experience of being which bears on the subject as an unknown unforgotten. It is the traces of such an encounter that we hear in the stories – the remembering – of *Kuba*'s video recordings.[25]

Nietzsche's 'now' time of the unhistorical is also documentary film's recorded 'now' time of a present speaking and acting. For insofar as film shows rather than tells, it does so as an ongoing present which unfolds before our eyes but which, having been recorded, anticipates – imagines – a future audience for whom this 'now' time will then be a past; and yet, for the audience, this pastness is unmarked, its time appearing as just contemporary, a continuing time – a duration. It is in measured time that causality and narrative come into play, in a past which foreshadows the present as its future, a future which we will fully know only once past, as we determine – that is, speculatively construct – its causes and consequences. Here is historical reality; but it is without history until remembered, recollected in a process of reflection which nevertheless suspends the possibility of action. Everyday reality, however, just is: unthought, mastered in the distraction of the habitual but, as Benjamin suggested, enabling change. This cannot be understood simply as a dialectics; but neither does Deleuze's 'meanwhile' sufficiently dispel the dualism of his opposition of movement versus time.

Benjamin, writing of 'the notion of a present which is not a transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop', is pointing to the importance of stilling – an interval – in the movement of time as action. He argues:

> Materialist historiography . . . is based on a constructive principle. Thinking involves not only the flow of thoughts, but their arrest as well. Where thinking suddenly stops in a configuration pregnant with tensions, it gives that configuration a shock, by which it crystallises into a monad.[26]

For Benjamin this enables what he terms the blasting open of the continuum of history – that is, of historical time as a movement of cause and effect. The historical object appears in a new setting, described more recently by Andrew Benjamin as 'the explosive 'now-time', the instantiation of the present by montage'.[27]

Film's explosive impact on art is as a time-based medium. Whether documentary or fiction, film interrelates times and hence places, showing simultaneous events and actions. These, being viewed in series, must be understood not only in terms of an already known and given causality but, in the demand to think two referents together – both this and that – as also bringing into play the possibility of a connection, or its palpable absence, in an interval that is never fully rational. Arising here is a process of becoming which cannot be represented as such but only apprehended through the imaginative and embodied work of spectatorship.

The 'gallery installation-specific' engagement of the spectator's body can be understood in relation to Benjamin's discussion of architecture:

> Architecture has always represented the prototype of a work of art the reception of which is consummated by a collectivity in a state of distraction. Buildings are appropriated in a twofold manner: by use and by perception – or rather, by touch and sight. Such appropriation cannot be understood in terms of the attentive concentration of a tourist before a famous building. On the tactile side there is no counterpart to contemplation on the optical side. Tactile appropriation is accomplished not so much by attention as by habit. As regards architecture, habit determines to a large extent even optical reception. The latter, too, occurs much less through rapt attention than by noticing the object in incidental fashion. This mode of appropriation, developed with reference to architecture, in certain circumstances acquires canonical valued. For the tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is, by contemplation, alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation.[28]

To engage in the process of habit is to engage with its temporality, in its construction and thus in its deconstruction. Habit is both the unthought of now-time and the institution of continuity. In the gallery installation, the time-based work engages us in a movement as a mastering 'by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation'; as a sensory familiarizing that becomes familiarity but without which the new – the object and the space of difference – could not be known. The spectator is involved in a movement that is both embodied, as a state of 'distraction', and also engages imaginative thought that is always in a relation to the time, space and place of her encounter with the work. If the time-based work, like architecture, is received in a state of distraction, such a medium nevertheless, as Andrew Benjamin argues, 'brings with it the capacity to reposition the hold of distraction'. But this occurs at the level of neither the individual nor the mass: rather it arises through an 'evaluating attitude' from the work's operation.[29]

The congruities and incongruities of the habitual and everyday of our world, placed in the gallery as a time-based interaction, present a juxtaposition of the referential with the real that is more-than-reality in the art of documentary time-based installation. Such works constitute an unpredictable potentiality for the viewer. The possible trajectories of encounter by spectators with the forty screens of Ataman's *Kuba*, for example, are myriad, and in the majority of cases will be incomplete; but the experience of incompleteness – or exhaustion, or even boredom – is itself an achievement of the artwork. The artwork is both the displayed television sets and the potentiality of each of the video recordings presented by them; so that the boundary we might assume between

28 Benjamin, 'The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction', pp. 239–40.

29 Andrew Benjamin, *Walter Benjamin and History*, p. 162. He is writing here in relation to film, but it now seems appropriate to understand this in relation to other time-based works as well.

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artwork and ordinary life, and that between the artwork and the non-artwork within the space of the gallery, is each overturned. The digital, the interactive and the documentary in the gallery, in pulling us between historical time and 'now' time, transgress the binarism of categories of spectatorship, producing a space and temporality of the 'meanwhile', of the interval.

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Cinephilia, technophilia and collaborative remix zones

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Romanticized and institutionalized as an expression for an 'excessive love of cinema' that emerged in postwar France for a generation of privileged audiences, cinephilia has come to be associated with nostalgia for the audiovisual pleasures of flickering celluloid in a darkened cinematheque.[1] Writing upon the fortieth anniversary of May '68 – and upon *Screen*'s fiftieth – it seems appropriate to resituate mid twentieth-century notions of cinephilia within early twenty-first-century frameworks that recognize that western European and North American assumptions about cinema – often articulated as 'universal' assumptions throughout the Cold War – are today less capable of recognizing the complexities of global articulations of cinephilia today. Indeed, film and media scholarship has appropriated the term 'cinephilia' for cultural and historical contexts comparable to those of postwar France, including South Asian diasporic attachment to 'homeland', through consumption of Bollywood films, to the 'cinemania' surrounding contemporary Korean films. Moreover, with the consolidation of transnational media corporations (TMCs), cinephilia reproduces itself as technophilia, a consumerist obsession with the technologies and the safe haven of the home cinema against an onslaught of potential threats within public places.[2] As a counterpoint to the TMCs' 'free trade zones', we offer the theoretical construct of 'collaborative remix zones' – zones where plural pasts, multiple temporalities, multiple artefacts and polyvocalities can join together to reclaim public spaces by challenging TMCs as they operate within structures of neoliberal economics and transnational

1 See, for example, Antoine de Baecque, *La Cinéphilie: Invention d'un regard, histoire d'une culture, 1944–1968* (Paris: Librarie Arthème Fayard, 2003).

2 Barbara Klinger, *Beyond the Multiplex: Cinema, New Technologies and the Home* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), p. 50.

3 Dudley Andrew, 'The "three ages" of cinema studies and the age to come', *PMLA*, vol. 115, no. 3 (2000), pp. 341–51, as cited in Christian Keathley, *Cinephilia and History, or the Wind in the Trees* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), p. 5.

4 Colin MacCabe, *The Eloquence of the Vulgar* (London: British Film Institute, 1999), p. 152.

5 See, for example, Andrew Sarris, *The American Cinema: Directors and Directions 1929–1968* (New York, NY: Dutton, 1968).

6 See their essays in Michael Chanan (ed.), *25 Years of the New Latin American Cinema* (London: British Film Institute, 1983).

7 Jean-Louis Baudry, 'The ideological effects of the basic cinematographic apparatus', trans. Alan Williams, *Film Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 2 (1974-75), pp. 39–47; Jean-Louis Baudry, 'The apparatus: metaphysical approaches to the impression of reality in cinema', trans. Jean Andrew and Bernard Augst, *Camera Obscura*, no. 1 (1976), pp. 104–26; Linda Williams, 'Film bodies: gender, genre, and excess', *Film Quarterly*, vol. 44, no. 4 (1991), pp. 2–12.

8 Jane Gaines, 'White privilege and looking relations: race and gender in feminist theory', *Cultural Critique*, no. 4 (1985), pp. 59–79, revised in *Screen*, vol. 29, no. 4 (1988), pp. 12–27; Manthia Diawara, 'Black spectatorship: problems of identification and resistance', *Screen*, vol. 29, no. 4 (1988), pp. 66–76; bell hooks, 'The oppositional gaze: black female spectatorship', in *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1992), pp. 115–31.

capital through a politicized cinephilia that adopts the strategies of radical historiography and reverse engineering.

Historically, the concept of cinephilia is wedged precariously between academic and popular discourses, articulating both elitist conceptions of individual pleasures (sacred objects, high art) and communal conceptions of universal pleasures (popular art, mass entertainment). Film historians locate European/North American cinephilia within three historical moments – the pre-academic moment of cine-clubs by the avant-gardists during the 1920s and later by the *Cahiers du cinéma* critics during the 1950s; the academic moment of post-'68 '*Screen* Theory'; and the post-theory moment of the return to history.[3] Cinephilia remains closely associated with 'auteurs' whose work appropriated conventions from classical cinema to transform filmmaking into film criticism. The *politiques des auteurs* propelled the young critics-cum-filmmakers of *Cahiers du cinéma* to develop cinephilia-as-criticism so as to produce the 'perfect' audience.[4] Across the North Atlantic, the international scope of French cinephilia – which adored Italian, Japanese, Danish, Hollywood and French productions alike – was rerouted into nationally chauvinistic 'auteur theory'.[5] The US film distribution–marketing–criticism circuit of Hollywood and film schools reprocessed this evaluative language into consumerist desire, fueling fantasies of access to, and palpable success in, the entertainment industry. This concept of cinephilia is inseparable from selective reading strategies that prioritize marginal, inconsequential or frivolous details to locate the rare and the rarified, such as lost prints struck from master negatives. This pretheory model of cinephilia is based on the production of individuality and is embedded within the logic of consumerism. It fetishizes markers of singularity, rarity and 'quality'. Work as object (art*work*) overshadows work as process (the *work* of conceiving/producing art) and extends to transnational forms wherein selected (assimilable) 'auteurs' are produced, marketed, distributed and exchanged – whether Ritwik Ghatak, Ozu Yasujiro and Satjayit Ray in the 1960s or Abbas Kiarostami, Mohsen Makhmalbaf and Zhang Yimou in the 1990s. Indeed, Glauber Rocha, Fernando Solanas and Octavio Gettino, and Julio Garcia Espinosa questioned eurocentrism and colonialism within auteurism.[6]

An actual theory of cinephilia also emerged in Europe and North America from modernist concepts (structuralism, Marxism, psychoanalysis), as well as from historical approaches (poststructuralism and feminism), to probe film spectatorship. If the 'cinematic apparatus' of Jean-Louis Baudry modeled itself after the ideological state apparatus of Louis Althusser, then the 'body genres' of Linda Williams appropriated psychoanalytic models of desire for feminist politicizations.[7] Manthia Diawara, Jane Gaines and bell hooks transform Laura Mulvey's 'visual pleasure' and models of desire into models of exchange.[8] Others have expanded cinema beyond film history and

9 Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participation Culture* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992); Jeffrey Sconce, '"Trashing" the academy: taste, excess, and an emerging politics of cinematic style', *Screen*, vol. 36, no. 4 (1995), pp. 371–93; Matt Hills, *Fan Cultures* (London: Routledge, 2002); Kate Egan, 'The celebration of a "proper product": exploring the residual collectible through the "video nasty"', in Charles R. Acland, (ed.), *Residual Media* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), pp. 200–21.

10 Paul Willemen, *Looks and Frictions: Essays on Cultural Studies and Film Theory* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 231.

11 Christian Metz, 'Photography and fetish', *October*, no. 34 (1985), pp. 81–90.

12 See, for example, Susan Sontag, 'The decay of cinema', *The New York Times Magazine*, 25 February 1996; Stanley Kauffmann, 'A lost love', *New Republic*, 8 and 15 September 1997; David Denby, 'The moviegoers: why don't people like the right movies anymore?', *The New Yorker*, 6 April 1998.

13 Peter Matthews, 'The end of an era: a cinephile's lament', *Sight and Sound*, vol. 17, no.10 (2007), p. 17.

14 Jonathan Romney, 'Back to the future: a cinephile's response', *Sight and Sound*, vol. 17, no. 11 (2007), p. 24.

15 Walter Benjamin, 'The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction', trans. Harry Zohn, in *Illuminations* (New York, NY: Schocken, 1968), pp. 217–51.

16 Thomas Elsaesser, 'Cinephilia, or the uses of disenchantment', in Marijke de Valck and Malte Hagener (eds), *Cinephilia: Movies, Love and Memory* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), p. 38.

17 Robert E. Davis, 'The instantaneous worldwide release: coming soon to everyone everywhere', in Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden (eds), *Transnational Cinema: the Film Reader* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 77.

theory, arguing that the practices of interactive and paracinematic media fandom – often rejecting the official aesthetics of the cultural elite – are structurally indistinguishable from the practices of academics and professional film critics.[9] These theorizations of cinephilia articulate a psychoanalytic model of an eternal quest for what has been lost and can never again be found. This insatiable, fetishistic desire for an unassailable object is now rerouted by TMCs, which purport to offer each generation of cinephiles new and enhanced access to lost 'masterpieces' and 'contemporary classics' in remastered DVD transfers, special boxed editions, and extra features.

For predigital generations, cinephilia evokes exhilaration and depletion. Paul Willemen argues that cinephilia is laden with overtones of necrophilia.[10] Indeed, psychoanalytic film theory suggests that cinema reanimates the very subject that photography kills.[11] End-of-the-millennium debates over the 'decay of cinema' and the 'right movies' suggest a conservative backlash against the democratization of 'film culture' powered by new technologies.[12] Mourning the near-simultaneous deaths of Ingmar Bergman and Michelangelo Antonioni in 2007, Peter Matthews laments that 'henceforth there are to be no more masterpieces – uniquely luminous works describing the finest vibrations of the creator's soul'.[13] Jonathan Romney diagnoses Matthews as bemoaning 'the loss of the hushed spiritual frisson that supposedly occurs only when a film is viewed in special, privileged circumstances' – in short, 'the passing of an ineffable aura in cinemagoing'.[14] Walter Benjamin's concept of the 'aura' is suggestive of the simultaneous distance and proximity within this conception of cinephilia.[15] Indeed, the nostalgia of 'cult films' and 'classics', Thomas Elsaesser argues, constructs relationships between the past and the present that emphasize 'distance and proximity in the face of a constantly reencountered past'.[16] Suburban multiplexes of the global North and urban multiplexes of the global South screen standardized products that are now part of commodity chains, while necrophilia for cinephilia emerges in the global art cinema sector. Films such as *Cinema Paradiso* (Giuseppe Tornatore, Italy/France, 1988), *Bye-bye Africa* (Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, Chad/France, 1999) and *Good-bye Dragon Inn* (Ming-liang Tsai, Taiwan, 2003) express how almost-empty cinemas have themselves become objects of mourning and melancholia due to their imminent closure or conversion to venues for encounters and pleasures other than the cinematic.[17]

Despite obsessions with singularity, originality and rarity within cinephilia, TMCs extend and expand these desires to encounter the sacred object of 35 mm celluloid master prints by digitizing images, reproducing them for DVD, video on demand (VOD) and countless other formats and uses.[18] This 'repurposing and multiplatforming' of 'cinema', to adopt the language of TMCs, actually denotes a *multiplication* of the past and the cinephiles' archive, a move from one pristine cinematic artefact as an essential, unified, unassailable urtext to many different iterations, versions, explanations, juxtapositions, forms and

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18 Cinephilia's desire for singularity, originality and rarity would seem to be entangled with the modernist myths that Rosalind Krauss describes in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989). 'Lossy' formats that translate celluloid images into digital code for storage on DVD and playback on computers and DVD players, such as JPEG and MPEG formats, involve compression by a deletion of some information, so that the infinite reproduction of the object without loss is possible theoretically but not actually. Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), p. 54.

19 Klinger, *Beyond the Multiplex*, pp. 58–73.

20 Ibid., p. 121.

21 Marijke de Valck and Malte Hagener, 'Down with cinephilia? Long live cinephilia? And other videosyncratic pleasures', in de Valck and Hagener (eds), *Cinephilia: Movies, Love and Memory*, pp. 16–17.

22 Ibid., p. 15.

23 Davis, 'The instantaneous worldwide release', pp. 77–8.

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presentations. No longer destroyed after a film's initial theatrical run, images are reanimated as directors' cuts, special editions, ancillary products, tie-ins and spinoffs. Cinephilia in an era of DVDs is associated with ownership in the home space, rather than with spectatorship in the theatrical space. As Barbara Klinger argues, DVD collectors focus on acquisition and organization, often purchasing the same titles in different 'special editions' as TMCs endlessly 'remake' commercial films.[19] With their special 'behind the scenes' and 'making of' features, DVDs draw this new generation of cinephiles into an illusory identification with the industry. Cinephilia converges with technophilia. Restorations of classical films couple the discourses of originality and authenticity with the ideology of technological advances. Contemporary technologies improve and move beyond the past by remastering its sounds and images.[20]

Beyond marketing and distribution, commercial film content incorporates cinephilia. Contemporary narrative filmmaking – whether corporate or independent – no longer privileges the authenticity of the past, but emphasizes 'producing media images saturated with memories' of evocative pastness that are 'condensations of clichés'.[21] Marijke de Valck and Malte Hagener propose that cinephilia uses 'history as a limitless warehouse that can be plundered for tropes, objects, expressions, styles and images'.[22] VOD allows users to access an archive of new and old content – blockbusters, independent film, international films – via cable television or internet download. Hollywood functions as a content broker – and a 'software' broker. Yet the TMCs still fear loss of market control.[23] Transnational capitalism consumes and reproduces cinephilia. The very term cinephilia rings hopelessly nostalgic and quaint. Pleasures once confined to cinemas migrate to television and computer screens, and to the brand-name mobile screens of Nokia mobile phones, iPhones, Blackberries, iPods, PlayStations, Xboxes, Wiis, MacBook Airs, XO laptops and other consumer-grade devices. Within transnational capitalism and Web 2.0, cinephilia shapeshifts into mediaphilia – an excessive love of audiovisual images mediated by analogue and digital video technologies.

However, new, non-eurocentric, orphaned, indigenous and ambient media dislodge and deterritorialize eurocentric and celluloid-fetishized cinephilia to acknowledge diasporic, exilic and other transnational practices. Unlike the belittling epithets for nonwestern film during golden eras of classical cinema, such as 'Hollywood on the Nile' for the Cairo industry or 'Hollywood of the East' for both the Shanghai and Hong Kong industries, a global proliferation of neologisms appropriates and relocates the 'global model' of Hollywood transnationally. Although many scholars, filmmakers and fans find such neologisms sustain eurocentric illusions that Hollywood/European cinema ever served a global standard, the neologisms do refer to sustainable film industries with local, regional and global aspirations. These industries operate according to models as radically different as Bollywood, Mumbai's glamorous and globally recognized megahit industry, and Pondywood,

24 For an analysis of the transnational cinephilia of Hindi films among Palestinians and Israelis, see Monika Mehta, 'Reading cinephilia in *Kikar ha-Halomot/Desperado Square*, viewing the local and transnational in *Sangam/ Confluence*', *South Asian Popular Culture*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2006), pp. 147–62.

25 Flame (Fuzzy clustering by Local Approximation of MEmberships) algorithms can be data-clustering and fractal algorithms that produce two-dimensional images according to non-linear functions, log-density display, and structural colouring. Electronic Sheep is a popular open-source screensaver that can be downloaded on most computers. http://www.electricsheep.org/ [accessed 13 September 2008].

26 Tzvetan Todorov, 'The uses and abuses of memory', in Howard Marchitello (ed.), *What Happens to History: the Renewal of Ethics in Contemporary Thought* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 11.

an emergent non-profit experimental research centre for mobile phone films located outside Pondicherry in Tamil Nadu. Cinephilia expands into the subnational love of the Tamil films of Kollywood (Chennai) in south India, the transnational love of Egyptian musical comedies in Palestine, and the love of Hindi cinema during Israeli bans on Egyptian films.[24] Cinephilia includes the love of Bollywood films by non-Hindi-speaking audiences in Nigeria that merges with the rebirth of Nollywood with the box-office success of *Living in Bondage* (Chris Obi Rapu, Nigeria, 1992). The Chiapas Media Project/Promedios, an indigenous media project based in Mexico and the USA, appropriates digital video technologies to combat deforestation, lack of water and cultural annihilation. Ambient media utilize open-source models, appropriating preexisting images and code rather than creating anew: thousands of users manipulate flame algorithms to generate collaborative screensavers via Scott Draves's 'Electric Sheep' as alternatives to corporate presets.[25] Nonetheless, these forms of cinephilia are often marginalized and discredited in European and North American media.

Cinephilia now exceeds TMC 'repurposing', expanding to recognize media across any number of screens. Abandoning obsessive searches for rare and forgotten images, cinephilia can engage a critical methodology of reverse engineering and radical historiography, embracing a notion of historiography based in contiguities rather than continuities, in polyphonic structures rather than unities. Within an overabundance of proliferating images, cinephilia can politicize rather than commodify. Moving away from passive spectatorship and insider knowledge of DVD extra features, cinephilia can mobilize active interactions where process overshadows product. The materiality of the cinematic is no longer sacralized, it is now endlessly reworked.

Cinephilia, whether in auteurist theories or in its consumerist TMC-fetishized forms, represses history and its materiality by immobilizing images and psychic imaginaries within the confines of a past that is always only a rarefied object caught within unfulfilled desires. Within cinephilia's quest for the authentic, the pristine, the uncontaminated, the insider quotation, the restoration and the urtext lurks a dangerous control of borders, content and ideas that situates cinema as a closed process with strict border controls and no trespassing. An imaginary wholeness constitutes the cinematic object. New technologies restore lost images; imaginary fantasies project cinemas lost, dying or dead. The historical as that which signifies and marks change is abandoned, replaced with a fantasized, inert, monumentalized and static construct of history. Tzvetan Todorov has cautioned that the monumental in historical discourse almost always suggests the authoritarian.[26]

A more radical historiography would remove the object from the monumentalizing position and open it to the multiple vectors of recirculation for new connections and new meanings. This conception of history rejects the idea of the historical monolith, the linear story, the fetishized object, the causal explanation, the perfect object, and the

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distancing between spectator/user and artefact/content. A radical historiography reanimates artefacts, remapping them within polyphonic and multiple frameworks. This radical historiography disposes the unitary object and the one-way relationship. Historiographers such as Ranajit Guha, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Philip Rosen and Robert F. Berkhofer have argued for a historical practice that is fluid, multiple, polyphonic and plural – to generate and create new forms of explanation.[27] For Jacques Derrida, the archive always looks to the future, not to the past, because the past is, to quote Hayden White, a place of fantasy.[28]

Heterogeneity forms a central feature of this reconceptualization of historiography. It serves as an antidote to the isolating immobilizations of cinephilia. This historiography focuses on the creation of new forms of knowledge production. Berkhofer has argued that this new historiography requires moving away from unitary history towards the construction of multicultural plural pasts. Charkrabarty and Rosen have advanced the idea of layered multiple temporalities to combat the linear causality inherent in both history and cinephilia. These conceptualizations entail multiple viewpoints, contradictions and disjunctures, and the formation of networks of meaning.

Comparably, anthropologist and filmmaker David MacDougall has proposed moving ethnographic film away from making a film *about* towards making a film *with*. Rather than filmmaking strategy as omniscient monologue, he proposes the act of cinema as a contemplative and participatory act, an act of collaboration, encounter and dialogue between the subject and the person filming. MacDougall argues for interconnection – rather than separation – to produce a compound work and an elaborative, embodied knowledge. As he explains, culture is 'a continual process of interpretation and invention'.[29] Drawing upon the practices of radical historiography and reverse engineering, collaborative remix zones enact such processes.

Since many TMCs accumulate annual profits larger than the gross national products of ninety percent of the nation states recognized by the UN, public media redefines itself within new media ecologies. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, independent and oppositional media were pitted against corporate media in a binary opposition based on different positions within political economics and nation states: nonprofit versus for profit, independent versus corporate. In the past fifteen years, these borders and bifurcations have become increasingly blurred and fluid. 'Indiewood' has developed, facilitating the distribution of independent feature narrative films in the US by transnational corporations. With the reorganization of the TMCs into primarily distribution companies and the subsequent outsourcing of production, many independents now make a living as freelances. Further, the proliferation of new distribution and exhibition technologies has contributed to a dramatic shift in the independent sector away from this bifurcation into a more complexly layered media ecology that is

27 See Ranajit Guha, *History at the Limit of World-History* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2002); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 180–213; Philip Rosen, *Change Mummified: Cinema, Historicity, Theory* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), pp. 20–87; Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr, *Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 53–75.

28 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: a Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 68; 'Interview with Hayden White, in Eve Domanska (ed.), *Encounters: Philosophy of History after Postmodernism* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, 1998), p. 34.

29 See David MacDougall, *Transcultural Cinema* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 95.

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constantly in flux. This new public media ecology creates spaces for the emergence of subnational, supranational, transnational, minoritized and indigenous media.

Collaborative remix zones mobilize the logic of new media to create anew from what already exists, selecting and compositing in a conceptual space that functions in real time, politicizing the 'repurposing' of classical film as 'content' to be distributed across 'platforms' such as DVD and VOD. Collaborative remix zones embrace new media's foregrounding of 'remediation', which rehabilitates media in 'a process of reforming reality as well'.[30] Whether on laptops, mobile devices or the internet, collaborative remixing extends the active production of meaning embedded within cinephilia into the regime of radical historiography, enabling interventionist pleasures. Reverse engineering and radical historiography imagine archives as open and recombinant, active rather than static, evolving not fixed, as radically deterritorialized rather than regionally encrypted.[31] Collaborative remix zones move beyond the anonymity of private spaces for individual memory, the materiality of celluloid and the fixed location of cinemas into the accountability of public spaces for collective process, the immateriality of digital code, and an openness to real and virtual locations. Collaborative remix zones politicize notions of cinephilia that have been subsumed by TMCs. Although the borders dividing nation states are increasingly policed, collaborative remix zones produce spaces for transnational contestation over the control of cinema and its meaning to cinephiles, pointing to ways in which cinephilia can be generative of spaces for accountability. While transnational capital reproduces depoliticized and dehistoricized differences within 'free trade zones', collaborative remix zones open flows across and within differences.

Collaborative remix zones counter the individualism and fetishism of cinephilia with collective transgressions across borders, images, styles and ideas. It is important to distinguish collaborative remix zones from media piracy, a discourse spanning the TMC's international policing of copyright, mods and mashups.[32] Media piracy implies an act of transgression, of imbibing and handling the image, which has been distant and fixed. Whether in the form of non-licensed Hollywood features for sale in Tepito or Kuala Lumpur or Shanghai, or the amateur video mashups that transform Tony Blair and George W. Bush into contestants on The Weakest Link or unwitting lipsynchers of romantic duets, piracy remains trapped within the logics of transnational consumer capital: cinephilia that exposes itself. Even the politicized redirection of 'cine-mania' in South Korea since the election of a civil government in 1991 seems trapped. South Korea's National Security Law's enforced narrative of a racially homogeneous nation developed according to traditional conceptions of private, collective and unified identity.[33] In the Korean context, cinephilia 'functions to unify different groups with different positions' within a psychoanalytic structure of desire to see what cannot be seen.[34]

30 Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), p. 56.

31 Patricia R. Zimmermann, 'A manifesto for reverse engineering: algorithms for recombinant histories', *Afterimage*, vol. 34, nos 1 and 2 (2006), pp. 66–72.

32 Mods, or countergames, are commercial videogames modified by individuals or groups to create new games, ones that often call attention to the political assumptions of the original. Mashups are user-generated videos that combine 'found' audio and visual images. The term also refers to web applications, such as maps and RSS feeds, that have been modified by users.

33 Soyoung Kim, 'From cine-mania to blockbusters and trans-cinema: reflections on recent South Korean cinema', in Valentina Vitali and Paul Willemen (eds), *Theorising National Cinema* (London: British Film Institute, 2006), pp. 189–91.

34 Soyoung Kim, '"Cine-mania" or cinephilia: film festivals and the identity question', in Chi-Yun Shin and Julian Stringer (eds), *New Korean Cinema* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2005), p. 82.

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The collaborative process refocuses, on the other hand, on the workings and processes of cinema, rather than on cinema as an object of rarified adoration and fantasy – on cinema as experience and exchange, rather than exclusively as text and 'author'. It differs significantly from piracy, which almost always implies a relationship to the TMCs, caught within the binaries of legal/illegal, commercial/non-commercial and proprietary/open source. Instead, the collaborative process works with many other images and cinemas that have never circulated within transnational networks. These amateur films, orphaned films, travelogues, abandoned commercials and narrative works, located in archives, operate beyond piracy and fetishized cinephilia. Collaborative remix zones reanimate these artefacts, moving them into the present and the future. Collaborative remix zones peel away their preciousness and energize them within plural pasts. Archives around the world are confronted by governments demanding outreach for archival materials within diverse communities, not just preservation of rare objects. Rather than the fetishized surplus value of the cinephilic, collaborative remix zones emancipate the use value of the collective. The terms of engagement shift from 'transgression and exchange' to 'direct collaboration with' to create new explanations and new futures.

For example, the multimedia performance group Emergency Broadcast Network's (EBN) live performances demonstrated that VJing (live performance involving the remixing of video) could be political – rejecting authorship, ownership and commodification. EBN became the spokespersons for the radical potential of disturbed authorship, data sharing, image and sound appropriation, and for an entire culture based on sampling and reusage.[35] These works reverse-engineer the logic of individual, private and unconscious desire into a logic of collaborative, shared and politicized exchange. Collaborative remix zones are ubiquitous, yet often seem invisible because they eschew the criteria of territorialized and corporatized cinephilia. The examples of collaborative remix zones described below suggest two contours of deterritorialized, decorporatized and politicized cinephilia in practice. One example operates with the support of the archives and institutions that provide digitized versions of footage for remixing; the other works within the liminal spaces between corporate ownership of archives and user-generated content. Both politicize history by unsettling the assumptions of preservation and conservation as ends into themselves. Both enact critiques of the systemic control of access to archives by TMCs, including practices and protocols that seek to monopolize media, enforce copyright, reinforce unified ('official') interpretations of film, and exploit amateurs as an equivalent of outsourced or freelance research and development.

Performed on 28 March 2006 in Ithaca, New York, the Onward Project's *Trafficking in the Archives* suggests the collaborative, political potentials of cinephilia. The Project includes the directors of a film festival, curators, professional musicians and filmmakers, as well as

36 Other projects by the Onward Project include *Nanook Revisited* (2004), commissioned for the fiftieth anniversary tribute to the Robert Flaherty Film Seminars and performed at the seminar and later at the New York Museum of Modern Art; and *'Within Our Gates' Revisited and Remixed* (2004), performed at the Orphans of the Storm Symposium at the University of South Carolina. See Anna Siomopoulos and Patrician Rodden Zimmermann, 'Silent film exhibition and performative historiography', *The Moving Image: the Journal of the Association of Moving Image Archivists*, vol. 6, no. 2 (2006), pp. 109–11. The contribution of Lisa Patti in the conception and realization of *Trafficking in the Archives* deserves special recognition.

37 Gina Marchetti, *Romance and the 'Yellow Peril': Race, Sex and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), p. 79.

38 Scott Simon, programme notes to *Treasures from the American Archives* (Washington, DC: National Film Archives, 2000), p. 45.

39 David Bordwell, 'Technicolor', in David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson (eds), *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 353.

archivists from the National Film Preservation Foundation and the UCLA Film and Television Archive, Northeast Historic Film, and the Human Studies Film Archives at the Smithsonian Institution.[36] Commissioned as the preview event for the 2006 Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival, *Trafficking in the Archives* reconsiders early US cinema through its representations of changes to the environment effected by humans in their quest for love and money. From the local harvesting of ice and sardines to the global trafficking of women as brides; from selling cigarettes and refrigerators to conveying the need to sail across the 'south seas' to rescue local populations from imaginary diseases, early cinema documents the lived realities and anxious fantasies of geopolitical and physical exchange.

The event places the post-rock and post-minimalist music of Piano Creeps, featuring Mary Lorson and Billy Coté, in critical dialogue with the history of film exhibition and the corporatization of the filmgoing experience in the USA. It revitalizes early theatrical practices of combining the attractions of local musicians and heterogeneous programme of short and feature-length films to offer audiences an experience that was rendered almost extinct with the advent of synchronized sound and the consolidation of theatrical and distribution circuits. Rather than evoking a largely depoliticized and dehistoricized cinephilia via silent-era musical accompaniment with period piano scores, *Trafficking in the Archives* revitalizes the relationship of sound and visual images as a transnational, disjunctive critical dialogue. The feminist-inflected vocal styles and alternative musical rhythms of Piano Creeps create space for critical reflection upon visual images of Technicolor's feature production of *The Toll of the Sea* (Chester M. Franklin, USA, 1922), a 1936 Universal Newsreel documenting a 'bumper year' for ice harvesting, a 1957 US Department of the Interior propaganda film on Maine sardines, and a love story set amidst times of contagion and inoculation in the independently produced narrative film *The Tahitian* (James Knott, USA, 1956).

The history of *The Toll of the Sea* suggests the potential of collaborative remix zones. Produced by the Technicolor Motion Pictures Corporation to showcase its new subtractive two-beam colour process, the script relocates the story of Madame Butterfly from Japan to China. The story remains a familiar one: an Asian woman must sacrifice herself for the white man to perform her 'true mission'.[37] Scriptwriter Frances Marion was instructed to sacrifice complexities of narrative and characterization to highlight the technical potential of the new colour film process.[38] By 1935, Technicolor stipulated that only its cinematographers could film using its colour stocks.[39] *Trafficking in the Archives* reconfigures Technicolor's proprietary rights to technologies and images to open up discussions of gendered racial trauma.

No longer disappearing behind coyly averted glances and pidgin English intertitles in an 'oriental' typeface, Anna Mae Wong appears trapped within the racial and gendered economies of classical

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Hollywood. In dialogue with the other films in the performance, race and gender extend beyond Hollywood's orientalist fantasies to newsreels, official state propaganda and individual, cinephilic imitations of Hollywood product. The suffering Asian face of women in these fiction films seem strikingly authentic when juxtaposed with the smiling faces of (subjugated) white women who prepare sandwiches and casseroles from sardines. *Trafficking in the Archives* underscores the systemic injustices and epistemological violence subdued by consumerist cinephilia.

Billed as a mashup of live-feed video with 1970s and 1980s Mexican pop music by DJ Güagüis, DJ Pata Pata and DJ Papichulo, *Cinema Salvaje* was produced by the Cinema Tropical and Fresa Salvaje Productions and performed on 13 July 2007 in Brooklyn, New York. Carlos A. Gutiérrez, cofounder of Cinema Tropical, conceived the event to collapse boundaries between public and private spheres and to question the proprietary issues of public performance rights. *Cinema Salvaje* politicizes cinephilia by repurposing the opening credit sequences to telenovelas, including *Los ricos también lloran/The Rich Also Cry* (Televisa, Mexico, 1979), *Dulce desafío/Sweet Challenge* (Televisa, Mexico, 1988-89), *Dos mujeres, un camino/Two Women, One Road* (Televisa, Mexico, 1993), the well-known comedian Capulina's satire of Hollywood's *Saturday Night Fever* (John Badham, USA, 1977) and *Benito Bodoque*, a Spanish-language dub of the Hanna-Barbera cartoon *Top Cat*, all of which have been uploaded to YouTube. Departing from TMC conventions of identifying and commodifying key moments of singular emotional intensity or artistic expression, these images are mixed by artist Juan Luna Avin in counterpoint with pop music as part of a performance party. Organized by visual artist Dulce Pinzon and curator Aldo Sanchez (aka DJ Papichulo), Fresa Salvaje promotes an alternative to 'mainstream' latina/latino music such as salsa and merengue by emphasizing a transnational diversity within Mexican music, including kitschy ballads, cumbias, punk, new wave, rock-and-roll covers, wedding songs and the theme songs to telenovelas.

Los ricos también lloran is considered one of the world's most popular telenovelas – becoming a media sensation in the former USSR during the 1990s – with its popular theme song, Aprendí a llorar (I Learned to Cry), sung by the star Verónica Castro.[40] As a media conglomerate, Televisa transforms popular culture into mass culture, so that 'purity of the long-suffering lower classes and the hope of redemption in the form of social mobility' becomes propaganda for the repressive PRI (Partido revolucionario institucional).[41] Subsequent telenovelas, like *Dulce desafío*, directed by renowned Mexican 'auteur' Arturo Ripstein, and *Dos mujeres, un camino*, starring Erik Estrada, a latino (nuyorican) actor with 'crossover' sex appeal in US television, extend the formulas of *Los ricos también lloran*.

Cinema Salvaje deterritorializes and decorporatizes transnational cinephilia among young Mexicans and other Latin Americans, Mexican Americans and others, whether latina/latino or not, in a media response

that surpasses nostalgia to become an appropriation of mass media, be it the PRI-complicit telenovelas or the dubbed cartoons from north of the border. *Cinema Salvaje* comments upon the unfair trade agreements within the 'free trade zone' created by the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement in 1994. Telenovelas have transnational cultural impact and have been among Mexico's global exports for decades, with media conglomerates like Televisa selling them to television stations in more than 125 countries, including product placements that change according to export destination.[42] Mexican film production, on the other hand, has 'spiralled downwards' from nearly 750 films per year to slightly more than two hundred in the treaty's first decade. By appropriating fragments of the telenovelas that circulate as part of transnational bootlegged 'clip culture' on YouTube before they are removed at the request of copyright owners, *Cinema Salvaje* illustrates Néstor García Canclini's argument that capitalism expands citizenship into realms of 'private consumption of commodities and media offerings', often over 'participation in discredited political organizations'.[43] As commodities, telenovelas are appropriated not according to the linear borders of nation states, but according to the less neatly defined transterritorial and multilingual market, where their meaning is open to debate and contestation.

In many ways, collaborative remix zones like *Trafficking in the Archives* and *Cinema Salvaje* reactivate an aspect of cinephilia from cinema's earliest years. Tom Gunning describes early audiences as incredulous, marveling at discrepancies between reality and its representation in the Lumières' films during the mid 1890s, pointing to a moment in cinema's history when, as Sean Cubitt argues, 'it was able to activate rather than absorb its audience'.[44] Collaborative remix zones bring into play a multiplicity of histories that cannot be fixed, even in memory; histories that remain transient and contradictory. Collaborative remix zones combat the commodified nostalgia embedded in the repurposing of cinema by TMCs. Collaborative remix zones politicize cinephilia via a deterritorialization and decorporatization of content – and of meaning.

Collaborative remix zones move away from immobilized and apolitical fetishistic image worship into the construction of collaborative communities where new knowledges and new connections can be actualized within a radical historiographic practice. Collaborative remix zones propose a radical rethinking of cinephilia infused with political urgency as the industry of cinema converts fully into an intellectual property industry. We therefore propose the following shifts in cinephilia: from a fixation on the past, including the past as it is reactivated through memory, to a recognition of the present moment; from psychical nostalgia to material artefacts – including digital code – that are suspended between history, the real and the future; from closed circuits of connoisseurs, cultural elites and idiosyncratic auteurs to open circuits of collaboration and networked distribution; from a fetishistic relationship with a lost object (what has been created) to an engaged

42 Toby Miller, Nitin Govil, John McMurria, Richard Maxwell and Ting Wang, *Global Hollywood 2* (London: British Film Institute, 2005), pp. 274, 166.

43 Néstor García Canclini, *Consumers as Citizens: Globalization and Multicultural Conflicts*, trans. George Yúdice (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), p. 5.

44 Tom Gunning, 'An aesthetic of astonishment: early film and the (in)credulous spectator', *Art and Text*, no. 34 (1989), pp. 31–45; Sean Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), p. 16.

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relationship with process (what can be created); from a logic of
individual, private and unconscious desire to a logic of collaborative,
shared and politicized exchange; and from the production of national
imaginaries to the activation of repressed and suppressed discourses and
practices that foreground transpolitical connections and vectors of
movement.

Curtains, carts and the mobile screen

CHARLES R. ACLAND

One hundred-and-ten years after the first cinema showmen presented actualities in fairgrounds, eighty years after the 16 mm gauge helped film burst free of the darkened movie house, and sixty years after regularized television broadcasts began to animate living rooms, we continue to hear the plaintive cry of the cinema-mourner, railing against the degradation of the magic of films and cinemagoing that has resulted from the ubiquity of moving images. Theatrical celluloid projections tenaciously reside in the scholarly imagination as part of a foundational definition of cinema, making extra-theatrical screens always appear to be second-best options or curiosity venues. Senior film theorists can still be found making perplexed observations about the presence of moving images on buses, in subways and on handheld devices. Such bewilderment only reveals the primacy of the motion picture theatrical situation in their conceptualization of cinema – a powerful site of formative movie memories, certainly, but a reified, select and privileged location for the moving image experience all the same. Cinephilia can be a beautiful affliction, yet that admission seems to have blinded us to the variety of forms of moving image culture that have been with us for so long.

Contemporary life is awash with moving images. They may not be exactly ubiquitous, for there are plenty of places in which they do not appear, but moving images are most certainly ordinary and banal. Formats range from outdoor advertising loops lasting just seconds, to standard commercial feature films, to monumental endless real-time video feeds. The integration of audiovisual screen formats – including television, cinema, mobile phones and massive outdoor screens – with an array of everyday and aesthetic practices has multiplied the conditions

and occasions for encountering moving images. The situation has, in many ways, cheapened the artefact of the moving image, though the very fact of miniature dramas in the palm of one's hand and gigantic electronic billboards on the exterior of office blocks can still elicit wonderment or disorientation. In this environment, various screen theories and screen studies, including work on cultural practice, policy and exhibition, are working to expand film scholarship, thankfully rescuing it from becoming the limited subfield of 'celluloid studies' and invigorating research activity shared by film, media and cultural studies.

Screen images arrive, occupy a portion of our sensory field with sound and vision, and then leave. In this way screens designate circuits as much as display formats. They represent links between dispersed spectatorial conditions, and are best seen as a network built to move texts around. Moreover, screen venues and occasions can compel people to move and gather together, for instance at gallery installations or archival screenings; or they can move with people, as do laptop and vehicular screens. Viewing circumstances can facilitate isolated individuality or spark practices of congregation. These features not only push us to address the conditions of screen presentation but also make us aware of the ways in which such conditions structure and regularize relations and traffic between people and screens. These relations are temporal and spatial, varying across time and location, and they prompt us to consider who is part of any networked screen practice, who is not, and what, exactly, is circulating. The alternation, replacement and flow of texts give screens the appearance of elasticity and variability. Accordingly, many critics have seen these impermanent views, and the appearance before one's eyes of something that is 'not truly there', as having a deep association with the virtual. Yet although there has been plenty of productive work in this vein, it is impossible to shake the obvious, gut-level observation that screens, and the cultural practices that surround and accompany them, are material.[1] Screens are things: they are the products of industry and labour; they take up space; they are made of solid substance; they change people's bodily orientation; and they send light into our eyes and, with the audio component of most screens, soundwaves into our ears. There is nothing immaterial about any of this. And anyone who remains unconvinced need only consider the outrageous environmental impact of the metals and toxins that constitute our screen world.[2]

Mobility is perhaps the most frequently deployed descriptor of contemporary screen culture, though it is worth reminding ourselves that it has long been a feature of modern media. The printing press prompted the mobility of books. The telegraph so mobilized language that it was seen as an annihilation of space. Even Walter Benjamin's famous artwork essay was, in part, about the circulation of art in the age of film and photography.[3] If we look closely at contemporary talk about mobile technology, without fail we see that it is not just about the situational variability of exhibition and the movement of screens, texts and people.

1 Two exemplary works that navigate both the material and the virtual dimensions of screen culture are Anne Friedberg, *The Virtual Window: from Alberti to Microsoft* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006); and Janine Marchessault and Susan Lord (eds), *Fluid Screens, Expanded Cinema* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

2 For an itemization of the environmental hazards of the computer industry, see Elizabeth Grossman, *High Tech Trash: Digital Devices, Hidden Toxics and Human Health* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2006); for a mapping of environmental issues for media studies, see Richard Maxwell and Toby Miller, 'Ecological ethics and media technology', *International Journal of Communication*, vol. 2, (2008), pp. 331–53.

3 Walter Benjamin, 'The work of art in the age of its technological reproducibility', in Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (eds), *Selected Writings, Volume III, 1935–1938* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2002), pp. 101–33.

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It includes reproducibility, with multiple copies available in multiple locations at once, and miniaturization, with comparative lightness and compactness facilitating portability. Media mobility subsumes discourses of instantaneity, at least as this appears related to the speed and the range of consumer choice ('I want to watch *Juno*, now'); it also subsumes discourses of personalization and individual localization of consumer choice, best represented by a language of clips on demand ('No, I want to see the David Letterman interview with Diablo Cody from a few years ago'). Textual variability – or versioning – is another characteristic linked to mobile culture. It refers to textual transfer between media formats and to successive and multiple editions, including directors' cuts, soundtrack changes for different releases and fan-based textual play.

Together, situational variability, reproducibility, miniaturization, instantaneity, personalization and versioning have crucially marked our mobile media era with informality, where easy and abundant adaptability to a variety of formats has increased the ordinary, quotidian aspect of moving images, as well as the relative disposability of any given incarnation. Motion pictures once had a precious status, needed care and skill in handling, and required special venues for exhibition. The formats that typify today's moving images – such as e-mail links to web-based clips, DVD recordings and episodes of serialized narratives specifically for mobile phones – are closer to the crude ephemera of newspapers and brochures, so unremarkable have they become.

Significantly, this rising informality does not operate in isolation but requires its corollary, in that it is accompanied by efforts to instal formal practices. Sharing family snapshots on a dinky mobile phone screen is informal next to the history of studio portraiture. Viewing part of *Pirates of the Caribbean: at World's End* (Gore Verbinski, 2007) on a PlayStation Portable while waiting for a train is a casual use when compared with attending the opening night of *Kung Fu Panda* (Mark Osborne and John Stevenson, 2008) in IMAX. In other words, the depreciating value of the artefact of moving images comes with an intensified discussion of the quality and appropriateness of various formats and spectatorial situations. This can be seen in the scholarly prognostications about 'the death of cinema', in the technologically-focused cinephilia of home theatres, and in the everyday cinemagoing decisions about whether a film is a big-screen movie or a 'renter' to be seen later when released on DVD. David Denby has claimed that the expansion of exhibition possibilities has produced 'platform agnosticism', such that people no longer care in which format films are seen.[4] However, I would maintain that exactly the opposite has occurred: the versioning of film has produced a heightened platform consciousness with more talk and more decision-making concerning screen formats than ever before.

Connected to platform consciousness, the cheapening of moving image material is one of the factors that have provoked concerns about

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preservation, as well as appreciation, of 'true' or 'classic' cinematic forms and environments. Embedded in such distinctions between an informal and a more rigorously serious appreciation of moving images is a hierarchy of taste. This hierarchy includes all the special restorations, architectures and museological treatments designed precisely to help set up procedures for consecrating 'the good' in moving image culture. Developing alongside this is a class of experts and entrepreneurs able to identify and evaluate the artfulness of screen images, poised against the barbaric, ordinary disregard of their value. Indeed, to revise the Bourdieuian formulation: as moving image culture becomes more informal, additional status accrues to a specialized class able to rescue the art from the disposable.

The hierarchy of taste evident in bourgeois film culture, and the class-bound experts who legitimize it, are an inseparable part of the organization of formal and informal encounters with mobile media – that is, of the conditions, practices and material manifestation of all five aforementioned facets. In this respect, materialist historical research is an essential component in the study of screen culture. And for this reason a full encounter with the social, political and economic dimensions of screen culture benefits from a serious engagement with the approaches and concepts of Raymond Williams and Pierre Bourdieu. Their work helps us see the deep structural organization of social relations in everyday life, which is essential to understanding the political import of moving image culture. Williams draws us towards the ordinary, seeing cultural patterns as typifying period, place and generation. Following his form of cultural materialism, we might ask about the structures of feeling of screen culture as they reveal distinctive and intelligible senses of our media world.[5] What forms of 'practical consciousness' develop so that we may live with, negotiate and make sense of media culture? Bourdieu's methodologies map the correlations between hierarchies of class and of culture.[6] For Bourdieu, social spaces embody systems of dispositions, which in turn produce senses of class appropriateness, entitlement and inaccessibility. Both provide ways of elucidating the forces and conditions that organize the lived experience of capitalist culture, which is foundational to an analysis of class formation and differential distribution of social power. Thinking about our culture of screens, Williams's and Bourdieu's writings clarify that media culture consists of a legible set of experiences about a shared contemporary moment, advanced and legitimized by a related class stratum of experts and connoisseurs – lay and professional – in the realm of technology, design, use, advocacy and critique of that same media environment.

Just as Williams and Bourdieu offer us a way of examining how power operates in the realm of culture, so too do issues of historical continuity and disjunction figure in their analyses. Accordingly, in order to evince the dynamics of contemporary conditions of screen informality and formality, we need to engage fully with the entire history of screen mobility. Of particular interest is the fact that motion pictures have long

5 Cf. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

6 Cf. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, ed. and trans. Randal Johnson (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1993).

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7 See Charles Acland and Haidee Wasson (eds), *Useful Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, in preparation).

8 Peter Harcourt, 'Towards higher education', *Screen Education* (first series), no. 26 (1964), p. 20.

9 Lynn Spigel, *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar America* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

10 For some of the research I have conducted in this area, see Charles Acland, 'Classrooms, clubs, and community circuits: reconstructing cultural authority and the Film Council movement, 1946–1957', in Lee Grieveson and Haidee Wasson (eds), *Inventing Film Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), pp. 149–81; 'Patterns of cultural authority: the National Film Society of Canada and the institutionalization of film education, 1938–41', *Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1 (2001), pp. 2–27; 'Mapping the serious and the dangerous: film and the National Council of Education, 1920–1939', *Cinéma*, vol. 6, no.1 (1995), pp. 101–18. Other related work includes Eric Smoodin, *Regarding Frank Capra: Audience, Celebrity and American Film Studies, 1930–1960* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); Anne Morey, *Hollywood Outsiders: the Adaptation of the Film Industry, 1913–1934* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003); Nicholas Sammond, *Babes in Tomorrowland: Walt Disney and the Making of the American Child* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005); Ronald Walter Greene, 'Y movies: film and the modernization of pastoral power', *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2005), pp. 20–36; Dana Polan, *Scenes of Instruction: the Beginnings of the US Study of Film* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007).

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circulated for instructional, scientific, promotional, community and religious purposes, though film studies and theory have conventionally ignored or devalued these non-art and non-feature texts and venues. This 'useful cinema' of institutionally functional deployments of moving image materials exploited the relative mobility of the cinematic apparatus, and with it the conversion of sundry locations into screening sites.[7] In some notable instances, the episteme of 'useful cinema' and its special relationship with new pedagogical and information dissemination strategies linked education *through* film to education *about* film. This observation is especially fitting for the fiftieth anniversary of a journal whose origins lie in the irregular publication *The Film Teacher*, then the regularized appearance of *Screen Education*, the forerunner of *Screen*. Regarding the parallel historical development of the film education and the film society movements, Peter Harcourt, then with the British Film Institute Education Department, wrote in 1964 that 'Screen education began in schools and youth clubs'.[8]

What follows, albeit in condensed form, is one branch on a materialist history of institutional screens, with special focus on post-World War II USA and Canada, using the discursive activity of organizational formation, policy debates, trade publications and advertising images as sites of evidence and illustration. The need for such a history exists because in research on extra-theatrical viewing contexts there is more media studies and film studies work on the arrival of moving images in domestic space than in other locations. Taking a cue from Lynn Spigel's invaluable book *Make Room for TV*, the work proposed here can be seen as a kind of 'make room for AV'.[9] These media of still and moving image projection and of audio recording and playback are so familiar to teachers and students as to be easily ignored or forgotten. Yet they are direct precursors of today's reigning common sense about wired classrooms and communities. Interestingly, the initials 'AV' often carry connotations of school, despite their use in any number of industrial and technical settings. Let us bear in mind, too, that this is a living and continuous history, with the clunkiness of earlier audiovisual playback devices, whether in use or in storage, still amply evident in institutions. The postwar historical moment speaks directly to the challenges currently faced by film and media scholars and teachers, especially those concerning our role in both constructing and critiquing a contemporary, technologically invested elite.

The mobilization of moving images and of the associated spectators and publics opened up new occasions for learning and instruction. Accordingly, with a myriad of potentially wily, even subversive, educational applications, concerns about the conduct and utilization of provisional exhibition venues arose among cultural authorities. A dynamic relationship between pedagogical reform and pedagogical alarm is evident in non-theatrical film organizations, including film societies and councils, in Canada and the USA between 1920 and 1960.[10]

Among the activities of organizations such as the highly visible Film Council of America (FCA) was the functional deployment of film – that is, the use of the medium for specific and narrowly defined instructional purposes, an engagement that frequently dovetailed with issues of film aesthetics and appreciation. The FCA's operations involved the establishment of procedures of film evaluation and modes of group discussion about films and issues, as well as the advancement of a production industry and of distribution channels both parallel with and connected to the mainstream commercial sector. The media educationalists who spearheaded these enterprises formed a compact of concerned citizens who, through their efforts to advance an idea of progress and modernization through media participation and availability, were helping to stabilize the class divisions of this new phase of mass democratic society. These educationalists might be seen as the first generation of media experts. Their efforts, in which the language of liberal pluralism and public access dominated, helped to introduce ways of seeing, knowing and managing the expanded citizen–audience as its encounters with media forms, as consumers and producers, became an increasingly central part of school, work and leisure. In this way, the media educational activists, some voluntary and some salaried, were organic intellectuals in the Gramscian sense, not because they were ideologically progressive – they were not unproblematically so – but inasmuch as they participated in, and benefited from, the refortification of class boundaries.

The mobility of functional film did not stand as evidence of the singular technological advantage of motion pictures, but was appended to a series of other media innovations designed specifically for the classroom and community context. Film was part of an expanded media environment that included opaque and overhead projectors, tachistoscopes, film strips, slide shows, television, sound materials (record players, recording devices and radio) and, in the 1960s, the programmed instruction of teaching machines (figures 1, 2 and 3). For example, at a 1946 conference on audiovisual methods for international understanding sponsored by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the FCA, participants made a point of explaining that when people talked about film or motion pictures, which they did throughout, they were in fact referring to all audiovisual materials.[11] Throughout the post-World War II period, the various forms of social scientific or psychological monitoring of academic performance associated with educational media operated with an eye to 'a package of multi-media instructional segments', or what was sometimes called a 'total systems approach'.[12]

The rise of audiovisual education was neither automatic nor sudden. Compared with the way new media training for a world of technology is now taken for granted, the levels of scepticism were astronomical, and indeed prompted some ironic commentary by these technologized educationalists. A 1949 issue of *Educational Screen* covered a mock trial

11 Helen Seaton Preston (ed.), *Audio-Visual Materials Toward International Understanding* (Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 1946), p. 2.

12 Leslie J. Briggs, Peggie L. Campeau, Robert M. Gagné and Mark A. May, *Instructional Media: a Procedure for the Design of Multi-Media Instruction, a Critical Review of Research, and Suggestions for Future Research*, final report prepared by the Instructional Methods Program of the Center for Research and Evaluation in Applications of Technology in Education (CREATE), submitted to US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education (Pittsburgh, PA: American Institutes for Research, 1967), p. 4.

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13   Evelyn Oelen, 'Mr AVA vs the State of NJ', *Educational Screen,* February 1949, p. 61.

14   Ibid., p. 62.
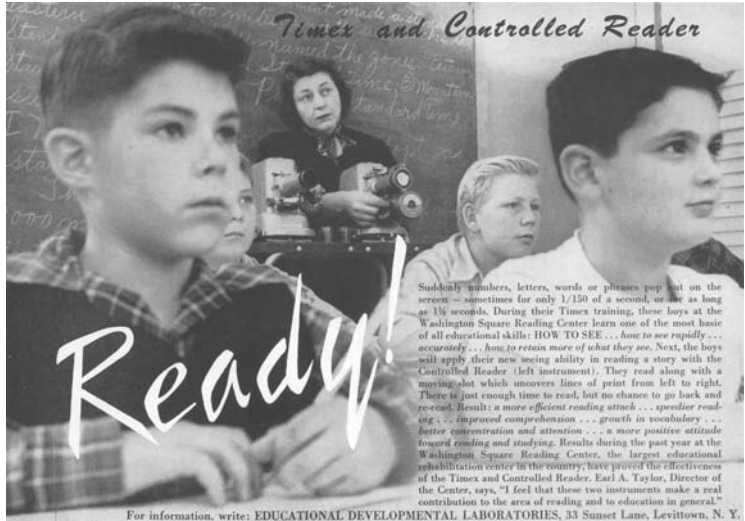
of instructional media. Written in a hardboiled, court reporting style, 'Mr AVA vs the State of NJ' had audiovisual aids charged with the student and teacher time it 'did abstract, filch, waste, fritter, consume, destroy and otherwise dispose of '.[13] Irene Cypher, of the NYU Department of Communication, and a leading researcher and advocate for technology in the classroom, is shown testifying with 'her jaw set against blandishments' of the prosecutor.[14] The jury, not surprisingly, found Mr AVA not guilty as charged.

Although the instructional genre had been evident in the first decade of cinema, and safe 16 mm film was available from the 1920s onwards, as Robert Filep and Wilbur Schramm observed: 'Instructional films . . . have been available for many decades but their use was negligible until

Fig. 3. Mobile media, from 'Television goes to school', *Educational Screen,* November 1948, p. 439.

15 Robert Filep and Wilbur Schramm, *A Study of the Impact of Research on Utilization of Media for Educational Purposes,* sponsored by NDEA Title VII 1958–1968 (Washington, DC: US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, 1970), p. 6.

the launching of Sputnik sparked an unprecedented concern and dissatisfaction with the learning devices and practices of the time'.[15] While 'negligible' is not an entirely accurate assessment, there was a sense, at least from the 1930s on, that institutional media, in particular film, were under-utilized as a consequence of teacher and community leader confusion, lack of training, and lack of coordination between users and producers. What was called visual education at the turn of the last century, and then audiovisual instruction in the 1940s, was a long, slow reformation of pedagogical and technological practice.

This reformation of pedagogical practice, and its usage for mass-mediated education, was not some ideologically neutral enterprise aimed simply at doing things better. It harboured an ideal of liberal, technocratic society; it redrew class boundaries around professions and expertise that served this vision; and it constituted an unprecedented redefinition of learning contexts as markets to be exploited. Indeed, the history of the educational market is tightly bound up with the history of audiovisual instructional technologies. There existed trade publications for and about these technologies, including *Educational Screen*, *Business Screen*, *Film News*, *Educational Technology* and *Audiovisual Instruction*. In these sources one finds that the watchwords of the day were democratization, community orientation, speed, low skill requirement, simplicity of use, mobility, adaptability and informality. In fact, 'informal education' described the kind of media learning that occurred almost by accident during the course of daily life, as well as the experiments in the less rigidly structured pedagogy of the 1960s and 1970s, such as open classrooms.

World War II gave an enormous boost to mass mobilization and mass education efforts, which included experiments in how these programmes could best be mounted through film and other media.[16] An alternately chaotic and well-coordinated campaign to sell the promises of mass-mediated education to public institutions continued through the postwar decades. The problems impeding the widespread acceptance of electronically accessorized courses included a sort of consumer fatigue from too many materials available or, more damaging to the presumptions of the rising technocracy, a reluctance to change pedagogical practices due to an inability to see any advantages in doing so. Recommendations continued to stress testing and experimentation of the media in question, to demonstrate and discern the most effective media choices for different pedagogical goals. The Yale University Motion Picture Research Project, for example, used controlled experimental situations to determine the best types of teaching films, with differing versions of films tested on school children. Funding for this came from the MPAA and from Teaching Film Custodians, a distributor and promoter of educational film noted especially for its handling of Hollywood shorts and excerpted features.[17]

Since the benefits were not equally evident to everyone, they had to be demonstrated and sold. The collective resources devoted to this enterprise were remarkable. But the questions addressed were largely not about the long-term consequences of creating a citizenry for a technologized world through technologized means. They focused on how fast, how efficiently, how expansively, through what procedures and through what mechanisms different instructional tasks could be accomplished. In the USA, a number of organizations sponsored this new world. For example, the National Education Association (NEA), a leading agenda-setting organization for educational policy established in 1848, launched its Department of Visual Instruction in 1923, changing its

16 For a valuable summary of this work, see Charles F. Hoban, Jr and Edward B. Van Ormer, *Instructional Film Research 1918–1950* (New York, NY: Arno Press, 1970), originally a report from the Instructional Film Research Program at Pennsylvania State College, 1951.

17 See Mark A. May and Arthur A. Lumsdaine, *Learning From Films* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1958).

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Fig. 4. Ancient vs modern teacher, Victor film projector advertisement, *Educational Screen,* December 1946, p. 548.

name to Department of Audio-Visual Instruction (DAVI) in 1947; in 1971, this department became a separate organization, the Association for Educational Communications and Technology. DAVI and others produced and circulated audiovisual catalogues, policy documents and scholarly research, all with the intention of advancing the beneficial use of audiovisual materials in instructional situations. In addition to explicitly educational enterprises such as DAVI and FCA, there were a number of industry lobbies including the National Association of Visual Education Dealers (renamed the National Audio Visual Association after World War II) and the Visual Equipment Manufacturers Council.

Making the case for the audiovisual revolution were educationalists, psychologists, sociologists and early communication scholars, among

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whose number were communication studies *éminence grise* Wilbur Schramm, Scott Fletcher of Encyclopedia Brittanica Films and the Ford Foundation's Fund for Adult Education, Samuel Renshaw, Mark May and Edgar Dale, the latter three of whom had conducted and published research in the 1930s as part of the Payne Fund studies on the effects of films on children. Together with many others, they formed a breed of applied communication specialists and media experts, with links to a new and increasingly powerful industrial sector. Developing workshops and

Dramatic NEW Teaching Aid...

AMERICAN OPTICAL OPAQUE PROJECTOR

conferences (such as the American Film Assembly) and journals (such as *AV Communication Review*) and inventing new job responsibilities and titles (such as Director of AV Services), here was what Williams called a cultural formation, which begins as a timely alliance of actors within a more stable preexisting institutional setting. Importantly, cultural formations are one way in which classes recalibrate their membership and assist in a degree of intergenerational continuity.

For this cohort of media enthusiasts, the air of the little schoolhouse was stale, especially when compared with the flashy media that people were experiencing in their everyday lives. Instructional methods had to be brought in line with the media with which people already lived. An anxiety about relevance crept into the rationales for electric learning, and the imperative of modernization was prevalent. As portrayed in an advertisement for Victor film projectors, the single student conversing directly with the teacher was an ancient approach to education. In contrast, 'the way in modern pedagogy' was the motion picture, the 'modern teacher' that could bring ancient times to life for enthralled children (figure 4). Bound up with this modern way were methods to instruct quickly and efficiently, as represented in the Spencer Delineascopes advertisement's assertion that its products help 'picture in a minute what you'd say in an hour' (figure 5). The processing and the measurement of the success of the task of teaching were introduced as objectives, and the cult of performance measures for teachers was

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growing. In effect, an instrumentalist battle against wasteful learning was being waged.

For all of the language of democratization and access to media hardware, AV lent authority to teachers. The media's newness and ability to dazzle provided a way to command learning situations. The 'dramatic new' American Optical opaque projector expresses a certain muscularity and seems to advocate a 'shock and awe' mode of instruction (figure 6). Contrary to the impression given by the Victor film projectors advertisement, only rarely were 'teacherless' classrooms promoted as a benefit of instructional audiovisual equipment. Instead, the dominant rhetoric defined new roles for teachers, roles that stressed an expansion in the numbers of students managed and processed, whether through the integration of group discussion with instructional media or by teachers

acting as guides and facilitators for individual learning. The facilitator role became a leading pedagogical approach in the 1960s.

Portability disseminated a sense of the everywhere-ness of instruction and supposedly matched a rising mass democratic and participatory culture. Movie-Mite's Bell Boy sound slide film unit offered a hand-carry screen and projector from 1945 onwards (figure 7). The complete presentational device, though still weighing in at a hefty twenty-nine pounds, was marketed for use in sales training and Sunday schools, and boasted an exceptionally early appearance of what was referred to as a 'desk top screen'. This was a unified media system, with a combination of screen, projector and speakers permitting situational flexibility. In the postwar period, much discussion and many products on the market emphasized configurations of media rather than a single medium. A good deal of the design of programmes and many of the media devices sold were premised on the integration of materials: essays *and* films, recordings *and* opaque projectors. Organizations like the FCA publicized not only film but certain kinds of reading material, film strips and television, as well as techniques of discussion. The National Film Board

18 'Schools are held in need of funds for machine aids', *The New York Times*, 2 October 1962, p. 33.

19 Filep and Schramm, *A Study of the Impact of Research on Utilization of Media for Educational Purposes*, p. 7 (emphasis in original).

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Fig. 9. Portable, floor-level, viewing hut, from 'Film strips and primary reading', *The Instructor*, June 1953, p. 86.
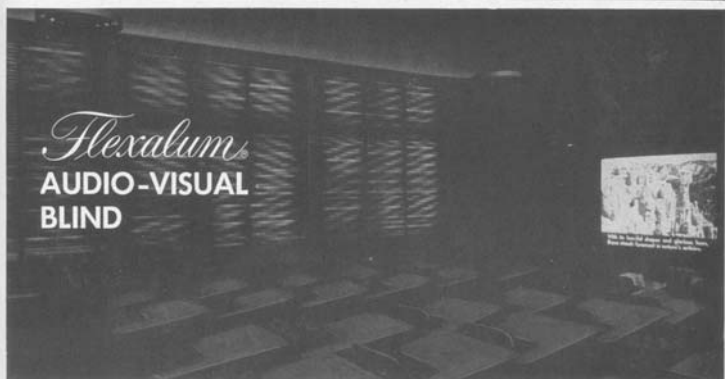
of Canada, beyond its central commitment to film production and distribution, created and circulated newsletters, teacher manuals, overhead transparencies, film strips and still photographs. In essence, a medium was not expected to stand on its own, and content was seen as adaptable, transferable and complementary to material in other formats. One might think of this as a brand of convergence *avant la lettre*. As a starting point for a classroom's media system, in 1962 University of Southern California professor James D. Finn listed seven essential components in contemporary teaching: 16 mm sound film projector, film strip projector, overhead projector, radio, record player, tape recorder and television. He recommended that at least five of these be made available to all classrooms.[18] Given, then, that a dominant understanding on the part of educationalists and entrepreneurs highlighted film's relationship to other media formats, it is a historical miscalculation for contemporary scholarship to treat film as a singular and stable medium, at least for this extra-theatrical sector (and arguably for other film sectors as well).

Included in this 'interrelated *system* of learning resources'[19] were all sorts of materials besides projectors and content, elements that tend to fall off the map for film and media scholars. The 'system' consisted of a variety of screens, from state-of-the-art retractable wide screens (figure 8) to portable floor-level viewing huts (figure 9). To convert spaces into suitable screening locations, companies offered various methods of darkening rooms, as seen with the Flexalum Audio-Visual blind (figure 10). To store the various materials, space had to be allocated either in meeting halls and classrooms themselves or in designated

Fig. 10. Battling daylight, Flexalum Audio-Visual blind advertisement, *Educational Screen*, February 1956, p. 59.

equipment depots. Carts, stands and extension cords were designed to accommodate an easy and temporary transformation of spaces into projection rooms (figure 11). These were not inconsequential elements: these things were commodities. They were marketed and sold; they were altered and improved regularly; budgets had to be provided for them and rationales for budget commitments had to be made; space was needed to house them. The seemingly trivial materials of cords, carts, curtains and closets were essential for the temporary spatial and architectural reorientation and reprioritization of institutions required by the media revolution. Elaborate plans for specially designed and constructed media training facilities circulated, and a few such models for the future of media-assisted instruction were built; but the primary experience was

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Fig. 11. Modern audiovisual cart, *Educational Screen,* **January 1954, p. 31.**
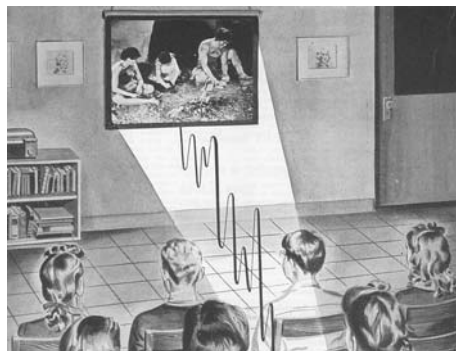
Fig. 12. View on the premodern, from RCA projector advertisement, *Educational Screen,* **May 1946, p. 255.**

one of the familiar metal cart being wheeled from one location to another and of battles with offending daylight.

The representational strategies of these advertisements must be read alongside the democratic ideal of expanded access to technological facilities. Women were one important front for the normalization of media expansion, with new expectations for the training of a female labour force of teachers. And while figures of women appear in many of the advertisements for media products as a primary target market of users, they also appear as a way to connote ease of use and portability. Furthermore, advertisements frequently depict instructional media as a vehicle to bring a palatable image of distant peoples into classrooms (figure 12). Along with this quasi-anthropological lesson was a confrontation between the modern and its racialized other, with the presumptively uniformly white classroom using its superior technological systems to open up a portal to the premodern. Versions of this discourse, reinstating media as a marker between the advanced and the backward, are just as apparent in trade news, where one finds that stories on audiovisual training programmes emphasized extension to historically disadvantaged populations, whether an *Educational Screen* cover story about visual education in Papua–New Guinea or a report on audiovisual teacher training at the famed African–American school, the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.[20]

With this budding alignment of a dispersed educational market already in process, the 1958 National Defense Education Act in the USA institutionalized and solidified this activity. This Act was President Eisenhower's response to the Sputnik crisis. Included in the Act was Title VII, 'research and experimentation in more effective utilization of television, radio, motion pictures, and related media for educational purposes'. By 1968, six hundred research projects had been funded through Title VII, to the tune of $40.3 million.[21] Meanwhile, Title III of the Act made new money available to purchase media equipment and to remodel schools: $280 million in the first four years.[22] The boom in audiovisual purchases through the 1960s was astonishing, a direct result

20 'Visual education in Papua and New Guinea', *Educational Screen*, vol. 30, no. 1 (1951), p. 18; Pearl W. Headd, 'A basic AV course', *The Audio-Visual Magazine: Educational Screen*, vol. 35, no. 6 (1956), pp. 218–19.

21 Filep and Schramm, *A Study of the Impact of Research on Utilization of Media for Educational Purposes*, p. 1.

22 Theodora E. Carlson, *Guide to the National Defense Education Act of 1958* (Washington, DC: US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, 1960), p. 3.

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23 Michael Molenda, 'Association for Educational Communications and Technology in the 20th century: a brief history', 28 June 2005, http://www.aect.org/About/History/ [accessed 26 June 2008].

of this federal support. For instance, DAVI saw its members grow from three thousand in 1958 to eleven thousand in 1970.[23]

The rise of audiovisual technologies after World War II, and the discursive terms of this expansion, continue to resonate in our own historical context. The ordinary presence of these objects and practices is part of the texture of our media culture, and hence merits our scholarly attention. Moreover, the reigning common sense concerning the indispensability of new media to contemporary education and training would not exist were it not for the years of advocacy for, and experiments with, those drab grey-green instructional aids. As film and media teachers and scholars, we tend to be stalwart supporters of access to certain kinds of projection and display formats. For this reason, it is essential that we understand the ways we have benefited from, and are implicated in, the history of the formation of this common sense about media use. The practices associated with that earlier era of mobile screens have had three lasting consequences, each of which involves the production of what Bourdieu described as distinction between classes in the realm of culture.

Firstly, building the modern classroom and training site – the structures of formal and informal instruction – involved systems of media formats, equipment, catalogues, accessories, spatial transformation, temporal reorientation, new relations between teachers and students, and new procedures and modes of evaluation. The terms of argument and materials were interconnected, signaling the methodological necessity for film scholars today to consider fully things, practices and ideas that promote different kinds of media use. In other words, we need to leave behind methods that draw artificial barriers around the singularity of a medium in favour of more complete renditions of the relations between media and practices.

Secondly, the rise of audiovisual technologies and their attendant priorities put in place the conditions of possibility for the very existence of the fields we call film, media, communication, screen and visual cultural studies. The ferment produced by agents and agencies of post-World War II media education solidified a distribution network for the instructional market, produced catalogues of media materials, argued for budget lines for film and media purchases and rentals, and institutionalized evaluation committees' assessments of usage and effectiveness. Obviously, a full history of disciplinary formation involves multiple forces and factors. However, the availability of film libraries, 16 mm projectors, and installed pulldown screens, not to mention curtains and carts, allowed us to treat with a scholarly eye what was being deployed along the corridor for other pedagogical purposes.

Thirdly, the era helped to develop and circulate a brand of media knowledge – including sets of arguments, evidence, methods and approaches associated with film, television, and the projection and audio technologies used in institutional settings. At the same time, these ideas were associated with a cohort of educationalists and scholars whose

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economic and cultural power rose as their ideas took root as essential to the operations of training venues specifically, and of mass democratic society generally. This cohort valorized methods and objectives for the deployment of media, and thus was born a model for what were seen as community and educational media experts. This is exactly how Gramsci described the formation of hegemony: in this instance, the organization of a class of technologically-invested figures with their resident organic intellectuals, a group whose work was to interpret situations, set agendas and make sense of contexts. Through this group's activities, class characteristics and boundaries were delineated and a space opened up in which an emergent elite found purchase. Through their writings, speeches, policy briefs, organizations and businesses, this new breed of experts put in place a hierarchy of cultural authority in which their ideas mattered, marking out the class and skill expectations that have expanded in the years since. The film reels and extension cords, the storage depots and projectors, produce an orientation towards textual material, and towards its multi-institutional availability, as well as an orientation towards a structure of authority and a vision of the future. The very process of directing time and energy to this media circuit is the prime ideological feature – a politics at the level of procedure – constructing a relation between materials, people and power. Understanding our role in the wider sea-change in the everyday presence of mobile media unmasks our own ongoing involvement in the creation and promotion of a specially trained technocratic elite.

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Screen studies and industrial 'theorizing'

JOHN T. CALDWELL

A film/media 'industry expert' sneers at scholars to stay away from his theorizing about television with the following warning: 'academics and analysts looking for reference material, rigorous Socratic arguments, or theoretical pontifications should not read this book'.[1] Yet, in far less dismissive terms, various film and television corporations also invite me (and many others) to gain 'exclusive' forms of access and insight into the ever-greater complexities of contemporary screen practice: 'you will have the opportunity to participate in an historic test that will influence the way motion pictures will look on the screen for the next 50-100 years . . . engineering knowledge is NOT required'.[2] Such invitations usually offer some costly proprietary information service, trade event or exclusive association membership to achieve the promised insights. Alongside this contrary warning–solicitation posturing by industry, I have also noticed a particular compliance on the part of many film critical studies graduates with the demands of the corporations that produce screen content today, especially in their marketing, public relations and management departments. This vocational trajectory frequently begins through unpaid internships, poorly paid production assistantships or the alienating life of 'assistanting' higher-ups in LA's production culture. I would like in this essay to explore this curious affinity between academic screen studies and commercial, industrial screen 'theorizing'.

In the present context, it is perhaps pertinent to ask where 'screen theory' can now be said to reside, if anywhere. Theorizing about the

3 These arguments are frequently made with partisan career objectives in mind, and usually with much less philosophical rigour than those of either André Bazin or Noel Carroll.

screen is far from confined to the academy. This characterization holds on several levels, and includes taking theorizing to mean 'classical' film theory questions that attempt to 'define' film/television or that argue about what 'quality' is in film/television. Industry panelists and directors in public post-screening question-and-answer sessions regularly tackle these classic 'aesthetic questions' with each technological or stylistic shift in their work.[3] At the same time, industry 'theorizing' can resemble more contemporary forms of analytic 'deconstruction'. This is especially so when 'below-the-line' craft associations, camera unions or honorary societies spend extended sessions collectively analyzing how award-winning scenes or sequences were shot and made by their own most influential members. In these ways, media workers make critical sense of their own screen practices to themselves. What is far less likely to happen in these convention-driven, professional theorizing rituals, however, is the kind of 'oppositional' critique with which scholars have long identified. And yet evidence of critical opposition does lurk and leak in the labour faultlines and perimeters of this closely guarded corporate sphere. That is why I focus primarily on the critical practices of below-the-line film and television workers, since their increasingly unstable and threatening labour conditions fuel correspondingly volatile oppositional discourses – about the conglomerates and the politics that exploit, outsource and render them obsolete. The long ongoing union–labour turmoil in Los Angeles makes these kinds of 'ground-up' critiques hard to ignore – even though the 'top-down' marketing of the conglomerates works at just this kind of erasure.

At some level, screen theorizing by the film, television and new media industries and the hundreds of thousands of workers and professionals within them dwarfs the constrained analyses carefully framed by scholars and cautiously reproduced by their graduate students. Even a cursory visit to film festivals, syndication markets, broadcasting conventions, advertising upfronts, industry annual critics' meetings and new media summits – as well as the filmmaker Q&As, demos, pitch sessions, panels, keynotes, 'boot camps', technical 'bakeoffs', retreats and networking mixers that now pervade and define each of them – reveals an overwhelming volume of those very activities that academics hold near and dear to ourselves and our disciplines: namely, close critical analysis, aesthetic speculation, screen technology assessment, reception study, historical debate, and general formal and cultural theorization. All of these play out in the constantly morphing and reaffiliating world of the conglomerates (albeit in a preemptive, proprietary way). Far from being averse to such things, many film and television workers now relish and spur these activities as part of trade habit. Meanwhile, the corporations that employ those workers systematically rationalize industrial critical activity as workaday parts of content development, marketing and branding. All this is part of a profound double bind in which production studies scholars now find themselves: at the same time as

viewers and scholars are offered excessive new amounts of rich 'behind-the-scenes' knowledge, media companies have instituted the most rigorous policies of employee 'non-disclosure', where all information is proprietary. Because so much of this user-friendly top-down industry theorizing is in effect sanctioned corporate disclosure, scholars might gain by focusing instead on the far less sunny unauthorized, ground-up disclosures of film and television workers.

What are academic screen scholars to make of this alternative or 'parallel' screen studies universe playing out across the commercial sphere? Dismissing it because these commercialized screen studies are so very closely tied to corporate profits is disingenuous and shortsighted. In part, this is because university professors in film, media and cultural studies have educated many of the film and television professionals that make up these post-Fordist, contracted and outsourced cadres. In some ways, that is, the new, convergent film and television industries are products of the very sort of theorization and study that we lay claim to as scholars. Work by sociological scholars of 'creative industries', like John Hartley and Angela McRobbie, has of course made clear the integral connections between intellectual and cultural capital on the one hand and social identities, flexible industries and global capital on the other.[4] What such studies are less inclined to do, however, is offer specific insights into the nature and significance of the industry's screen texts themselves. In what sense, then, does the screen's textual content animate intellectual and critical activities across the industry–academia divide? In attempting to tackle this issue, my scope is limited to the US context, although recent industrial studies show that these trends are increasingly (and problematically) becoming symptomatic elsewhere.[5]

As a textual and aesthetic phenomenon – like commercial television before it – contemporary cinema is a mess. I would argue further that today's technical augmentations, intertextual complications, and repurposing and syndication strategies make film a mess regardless of whether narrative or stars or phenomenological intensity can be said to dominate the individual's 'primary' screen experience. To be 'media-specific' today, that is, also counterintuitively means to narrow one's 'focus' down to the messy, repurposed, heterogeneous nature of the ever-proliferating screen text. US television studies scholars have had to acknowledge this sort of textual 'clutter' since the very start, since US television was commercially developed, aggressively marketed and pervasively consumed as the very antithesis of modernist specificity: as a portal that integrated all of the other arts for delivery in a small, convenient, user-friendly electronic screen package. Since cinema has been primarily seen on the electronic screen rather than the theatre screen for the last half-century (broadcast viewership has dwarfed box-office numbers worldwide during this period), film studies gains little by attempting to confine its research activities to some pure and exclusive – but ultimately non-representative – theatrical viewing state.

4 See John Hartley (ed.), *Creative Industries* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); Angela McRobbie, *British Fashion Design* (London: Routledge, 1998).

5 Three recent studies show that – due to global marketing and coproduction ventures – various industrial permutations once unique to the USA (like television 'show-running', 'branding' and 'franchising') are now emerging in other national media production markets like the UK, Australia and Canada. See Christine Cornea, 'Showrunning the *Doctor Who* franchise'; Elana Levine, 'Crossing the border: studying Canadian television production'; and Oli Mould, 'Lights, camera, but where's the action'; all in Vicki Mayer, Miranda Banks and John Caldwell (eds), *Production Studies: Cultural Studies of Media Industries* (New York, NY: Routledge, forthcoming).

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6   For a critique of these early audience studies, see Judith Mayne, *Cinema and Spectatorship* (London: Routledge, 1993).

7   For a more representative indication of the systematic nature of cultural studies fieldwork methodologies in recent years, see Barry Dornfeld, *Producing Public Television* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); Purnima Mankekar, *Screening Culture, Viewing Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); Nick Couldry *The Place of Media Power* (London: Routledge, 2000); Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals* (London: Routledge, 2003); Ellen Seiter, *Television and New Media Audiences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Anna McCarthy, *Ambient Television* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001); Laura Grindstaff, *The Money Shot* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2002); Arlene Davila, *Latinos, Inc* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001); Vicki Mayer, *Producing Dreams, Consuming Youth* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003); Vicki Mayer, 'Guys gone wild: soft-core video professionalism and new realities in television production', *Cinema Journal*, vol. 47, no. 2 (2008), pp. 97–116.

8   This work builds especially on that of two key figures: sociologist Paul Willis and anthropologist Clifford Geertz. Willis provides a good reminder of the importance of class issues and what it might mean for human subjects to 'theorize from the ground up'.

The reception of screen content today, therefore, forces us to reconsider what screen specificity might mean, and what industry's relationship to it is. This is especially the case given changes in the scale, scope, seriality and simultaneity of multiscale and multitasked viewing. Granted, filmgoers still pay a premium to watch in theatrical settings, but multiplex-goers and art-house cinephiles also consume images designed for Panavision on one-inch portable screens, YouTube, DVD, television, premium cable and pay-per-view. To theorize film today, therefore, means acknowledging various 'serial' and 'multitasking' forms of viewership. Far from being lost or displaced, the cinephile's pure screen state stands merely as one of a variety of viewing choices. Some of these serial and simultaneous viewing texts may have been designed to help viewers navigate and find content in the cluttered multimedia environment. Many of these 'mongrelized' viewing formats, that is, actually make it easier to find and consume the cinephile's primary obsessive object of desire in the multimedia flux and programming flow: the cult film, the canonical director's work, the kitsch-inflected guilty pleasure. In this sense, cinephilic purity can be seen as icing on a very thick multiscale, multimodal viewership cake. The relationship between the icing and the cake is a matter worth attending to in more detail.

This very textual messiness and multitasked and multimodal reception of screen content is precisely why film studies scholars would gain immeasurably from closely considering *industrial* forms of theorization and critical debate. Even formal and phenomenological studies of the screen would benefit by examining the technologies, trade discourses and work practices that produce and manage those screen phenomena. Such things can provide strategic help in unpacking and unraveling the knot that now stands as the screen text. After all, filmmakers, CGI artists, trade writers and technologists themselves always speak simultaneously from their position as sense-making viewers as well as professionals. Crossing perspectives in this way can mean confronting some nasty disciplinary boundary policing. Especially pertinent in this regard is a reconsideration of film studies' trusty straw man and 'other': cultural studies, widely characterized as antithetical to film studies.[6] Such dismissals have little credibility in the context of more recent, systematic fieldwork-based studies.[7]

For reasons that should become clear, of the two broad traditions for incorporating industrial considerations into film studies, contemporary ethnographic work on film and media can be just as useful as political–economic analysis. My own screen research integrates textual analysis with economic, institutional and ethnographic research, and attempts to keep the cultural and the class practices of production worlds in dialogue with each other.[8] From the 'interpretivist' turn in anthropology, I take as a methodological premiss the notion that all cultural practices are themselves texts, each of which is an ensemble of other texts. Rather than falling into the easy trap of asserting the direct social function or meaning of any given industrial practice, for example,

9   See Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1983); 'Deep play: notes on a Balinese cockfight', in Chandra Mukerji and Michael Schudson (eds), *Rethinking Popular Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990).

10 See James Clifford and George Marcus (eds), *Writing Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984).

I follow Geertz's model of 'looking over the shoulder' of one's interpretive ethnographic subjects 'as they make sense of themselves and their practices'.[9] This means 'looking' closely at the workaday forms of industrial screen theorizing and labour outlined above. It also means constantly attending to the autoethnographic analysis of one's industry informants. From influential figures like Clifford and Marcus in the 1980s, this autoethnographic perspective has come in and out of fashion in anthropology, media audience studies and cultural studies.[10] And yet, perhaps logically, the implications of the interpretivist model did not make much of a dent in either film history or the political economy of media. At least in graduate school, the archival turn in film history frequently means granting greater ontological status to discovered documents and industry artefacts than to screen texts. In fact, all three registers can be productively understood as convention-driven, 'scripted' acts of industrial–cultural interpretation (rather than as 'what actually happened'). Likewise, political economists of media might underscore their corporate critiques by self-consciously questioning the trade journals and financial pages from which they glean their evidence as forms of industrial–cultural interpretation (rather than as 'what is actually happening'). Saying that all the evidence on both sides of these entrenched oppositions works as stylized genres is not to deny 'real' politics; far from it. Precisely because disinformation and viral marketing now define our world, challenging the credibility of all 'evidence' (textual, economic, archival, industrial) as 'staged' genres is now arguably crucial to 'real' politics as well. In part, this means getting rid of the false 'text-as-screen' versus 'context-as-industry' binary that tends to caricature 'state-of-the-field' debates in the humanities and the social sciences.

So, screen theorizing fuels contemporary industrial practice. But where and how can film studies engage industry to create the kind of critical, textualized fieldwork proposed here? My own fieldwork builds on three background areas: film/video production, film studies and television critical studies. Yet it also draws on many of the other non-film studies disciplines that were presented at a recent state-of-the-field media industries research conference: sociology, anthropology, cultural geography and political economy.[11] Attempting to work across this divide between critical humanities work and social science means dealing with a set of nagging straw men erected by one camp against the other. This includes social scientists' dismissals of film studies' naive 'textualism' and interpretivism, as well as film studies' counter-cynicism about the naive forms of ethnographic deference, positivism and 'empiricism' that drive sociological research. Neither view proves very useful in media industries research; and both overlook potential affinities. Texts are also empirical, but are seldom framed as such. At the same time – at least in Hollywood – ethnographic disclosures to scholars (and journalists) by professionals are inevitably stylized and 'scripted', but are seldom acknowledged as such.

11 *Analyzing Media Industries and Media Production*, International Communication Association (ICA) Conference, Montreal, 23 May 2008.

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Beyond this mutual disciplinary caricaturing, effectively researching the multimedia conglomerates in LA arguably means integrating human subjects research, institutional and economic analysis, *and* systematic critical analysis of industrial texts, labour rituals and practitioner artefacts. Far from being antithetical, integrated critical fieldwork of this sort on cultures of production provides insights that complement those of organizational sociologists, political economists and film historians. Given this situation, scholars would do well to approach their research data, and their working assumptions, with some degree of suspicion. Various factors make this slippery territory. In Hollywood, the default behaviour of socioprofessional communities is rank insincerity: set visits are managed and choreographed by corporate publicists; and most interviews with above-the-line production professionals are sanctioned as forms of commercial marketing. Scholars would do well to see these forms of industrial 'information' for what they are: scripted performances and stylized industrial 'texts' – objects that require considerable subsequent textual analysis. And here lies the scholarly rub: accessing industrial theorizing frequently means extracting it from the fabric of duplicity and marketing into which it is invariably woven.

Two recent books, both of them very important interventions in the field of media industries research, are worth considering in this regard: David Hesmondalgh's *Cultural Industries* and Allen Scott's *On Hollywood*.[12] Hesmondalgh's book is among the most productive attempts to bridge the unfortunate, and sometimes testy, divide between cultural studies and political economy. One recurrent suggestion throughout the book is that sociological and economically oriented industry scholars should start paying more attention to 'texts': a good call, but something that the book itself, given its many other tasks, cannot undertake. What would Hesmondalgh's textual research finally do? Would it be different from the longstanding traditions of textual analysis in film history and television studies? If so, how? I take Hesmondalgh's proposal as a welcome prospect, and think that productive models for approaching this integrated 'textual-economic' research can be found in recent work by Paul Grainge, Karen Lury, Denise Mann and James Bennett, to name a few.[13] Scott's book, an 'economic geography', has proved influential in other ways.[14] His persuasive formulation of 'agglomeration' provides a convincing picture of the regional textures, material spaces and interorganizational logic of production workers in Los Angeles. Scott, a public policy academic, invokes some film history to set up his account, but quickly moves on to distance himself from the thinness of film studies in favour of the ostensibly more solid and substantive 'empiricism' of the geographer and the economist. One of the only downsides of the study is that the book caricatures film studies as something other than empirical.

I should like to build on Hesmondalgh's call for textual analysis within a sociologically informed cultural industries perspective, on Scott's call to ground industry research more empirically, and on Grainge's, Lury's,

12 David Hesmondalgh, *Cultural Industries* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002); Allen Scott, *On Hollywood* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

13 Paul Grainge, *Brand Hollywood*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008); Karen Lury, 'The 'ghastly' re-animation of time on digital television', in James Bennett and Nikki Strange (eds), *Television as Digital Media* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Denise Mann, *Hollywood Independents* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); James Bennett, 'Your window on the world' (PhD dissertation, University of Warwick, 2007).

14 Scott, *On Hollywood*. For a particularly productive application of some of Scott's perspectives in the area of contemporary media globalization, see Michael Curtin, *Playing to the World's Biggest Audience* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007).

Mann's and Bennett's precedents for integrated research. That is, I propose that the material practices and artefacts that fuel the industry must be engaged on some level through a film studies type of textual analysis – recognized as an empirical method – and not solely through the numerical abstractions of economics or geography. More than a mere producer of onscreen content for the public, the screen industry that I study uses small-scale and mid-level *texts* to forge and maintain trade and professional identities, to build consensus and maintain order, and to facilitate interpersonal, intragroup and intergroup social and commercial relationships. From my perspective, it is impossible to understand media industry business, or its institutions, without understanding industry's *text-based*, socioprofessional relationships and cultural interactions.

Six specific examples of industrial practice highlight why a different set of mid-level questions – somewhere between the higher-level macroscopic perspectives of political economy and the very local, on-the-ground perspectives of ethnography and human subjects research – need to be deployed in contemporary screen production research. Each example raises specific issues about how scholars can access and engage industrial theorizing.

   Industry analysis and trade writing as 'whoring'. Going to the source or to the archive to 'get it right' or to 'crosscheck' screen industry 'facts' is necessary, to some degree. But this kind of evidence is also much more slippery than some in the historical turn acknowledge, especially since industry trade analysis and writing are invariably fueled by acute partisan marketing and advertising goals.[15] Industry public relations writers occasionally refer (usually off the record) to writing for trade magazines as a form of prostitution or 'whoring'.[16] Showbiz story editors and publicists have told me that the public relations upon which the entire trade depends is based on effective 'lying'.[17] Many trade 'articles' (and indeed most of the articles in some less prestigious publications) are merely hastily reauthored company press releases. Other industry public relations writers specialize in 'planting' faux-articles in the lesser video production trade journals. Trade editors regularly accept such 'articles' if they include lists of general 'tips' for doing things better in the production specialization. Yet this form of 'helpful', but stealthy, writing in the trade journals usually conceals some vested product interest.[18] Screen organizations and the press, therefore, are tangled in a messy dance of information control and gossip that passes from a studio or network to the trade press. Constrained by widely demeaned confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements, which even unpaid interns and poorly paid production assistants are required to sign as a condition of employment, almost every firm guards all company backstage information or on-location news as private and proprietary – at least until the corporation decides to release it. Unauthorized storytelling is a threat that must be monitored, managed and punished. In one video production trade journal, the editor consciously likens the trade

15 Of the six examples, this and the third, fifth and sixth summarize and adapt more detailed, chapter-length studies, in John T. Caldwell, *Production Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

16 These comments on the nature and dark side of trade writing come from analysis of a wide set of video production trades in the USA, and from discussions with a seasoned trade writer, who asked that his identity remain anonymous (for perhaps obvious reasons), in Bellflower, California, 8 May 2004.

17 One industry publicist told me that the first lesson she learned when she started working in publicity was from an editor who warned her to prepare for the widely held view 'that all publicity was lying'. Comments made to the author, UCLA, Los Angeles, 16 May 2008.

18 A company's new programming language, computer code or proprietary technology, for example, may be presupposed or legitimized by the 'helpful' suggestion list being 'educationally' offered to the field. In essence, trade analysis functions as product placement.

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19 See Cristina Clapp, 'Editor's corner: the conversation', *Videography*, April 2004, p. 4.

20 See John T. Caldwell, 'User-generated, worker-generated, producer-generated content', in Bennett and Strange (eds), *Television as Digital Media*.

writer's task to that of Harry Caul in Francis Ford Coppola's *The Conversation* (1974), since the writer's task involves eavesdropping on and deciphering industrial secrets.[19] Clearly, the trade publications are very much in bed with the industry, in a relationship defined by how and when proprietary information will be leaked. Yet a flood of new, unauthorized *worker-generated* 'surveillance' and criticism of studios, producers and companies now churns across the blogosphere.[20] To combat the destabilizing threats of crew workers leaking unauthorized stories or secrets from locations or sound stages, the studios and networks now mount initiatives to 'counter-leak' their own preferred behind-the-scenes narratives. Corporate handlers and publicists also lead journalists around by the nose at press junkets, tightly orchestrated set visits and incestuous annual story-sharing courting rituals such as the meetings of the Television Critics Association. Journalists and trade analysts can, of course, write independently and critically; but studios make the consequences of such an action quite clear, threatening the loss of the very industrial access upon which continued writing depends. There is no subtlety here: if you write and analyze independently, you pay the price. This situation clearly colours the 'authenticity' of behind-the-scenes information. It also shows how territorial and exclusionary the genres of corporate 'theorizing' can be.

Hollywood accounting. In the film and television industry most economic information, budgetary numbers and financial reports can be productively understood as lies. This principle is otherwise known, and widely acknowledged, as 'Hollywood accounting'. In this scheme, studio overheads always conveniently expand to absorb revenues so that productions never officially return 'net profits' to contractual participants, partners and investors. Long before the dotcoms and the Enrons, Hollywood had spun numbers and cooked its books because, like the high-tech sector, much of its product pipeline had always been virtual, and its market prospects risk-prone and speculative. Accurate financial information and specific series and production budgets are closely held, proprietary and largely inaccessible to scholars. Only actual court cases and contract litigation can bring accurate numbers to the light of day, and this rarely happens. I regularly have to challenge my graduate students on the confidence with which they cite location reports, audience numbers or profit projections from *Variety* or *Hollywood Reporter*. What would happen to our research if, instead, we took these financial representations to be habitual tactics: stylized genres of cultural and economic leveraging, deployed to steer contract negotiations and investments through public posturing? The nature of Hollywood accounting means that scholars can only gauge the economic and logistical theorizing assertions in film and television development by 'reverse engineering' from the screen text back to institutional practices.

Industrial gossip and tracking groups. Talent agencies have long circulated 'tracking reports', intended to keep all of the agents and their assistants in the company 'on the same page' and aware of what is going

on elsewhere in the building and the firm. These written in-progress scorecards merely formalize the kinds of gossip that have long made screen content development a collective, buzz-driven, process. But beyond this, off the radar of most scholars and critics, is the pervasive practice of cross-industry 'tracking' and 'tracking groups'. Such groups collectively monitor and evaluate any and all production ideas and creative content that circulate long before they finally reach a film or television screen. Screen studies are, in effect, analyzing a production environment that already obsessively analyzes itself. But we seldom acknowledge this, nor consider the opportunities that this analysis of analysis might provide.[21] Agency and studio tracking continues to take place through exclusive online services and communication back-channels – much to the consternation of writers and producers who would rather get a fair and unbiased reading of a script only after they pitch it to a studio or network.[22] At one point, the Writers' Guild of America (WGA) counterattacked the heavy-handed control and exclusivity of producers' tracking boards by adding a link to a screenwriters' website that 'tracked' the reputations – good and bad – of producers across town. Once word spread, this rebuttal board created howls of protest from producers who claimed that it was 'unfair' for screenwriters to take cheap shots at producers, especially under cover of anonymity. Many producers found their reputations besmirched when screenwriters told tales of how producers had exploited and abused them. Screenwriters puzzled over the angry reactions. For years, producers, agencies and networks were secretly evaluating, criticizing and rejecting the work of screenwriters through tracking done 'under cover of darkness'. When screenwriters began sending 'feedback' the other way, the executive world of producers threw a fit. Other websites, including 'Totally unauthorized' and 'Defamer', have taken up and broadened the WGA's counter-studio ethos by posting online damning, anonymous, behind-the-scenes stories about producers.[23] Tracking boards, whether (managerially) from the top, or (anarchistically) from the bottom, serve as collective forms of critical deliberation and evaluation about the screen. Traditionally, those at the top have managed this industrial theorizing process. Today, screen content sinks or swims as a consequence of the multi-source theorizing gossip circulating around it through storytelling back-channels to which, until now, very few have had access. Some corporate tracking boards are now available to scholars for hefty fees; while quasi worker counter-tracking boards are, like BaselineFT's FilmTracker, open to anyone with online access.

Collapsing distinctions between creative content and marketing. For years, interviews with writers, directors and producers have focused on issues involving the creation of films and television series. Marketing was largely disregarded as an ancillary corporate activity largely off the radar of 'the creatives'. However, with the decline of media mass market economies of scale and the current hyperactive practice of multimedia repurposing, the distinction between the 'primary' entertainment

21 Traditionally, gossip and buzz about screenplays and potential new film or television projects circulated informally around LA through telephone conversations and casual meetings between those with enough clout to acquire or greenlight a film or television series. The off-the-record and unobservable nature of these discussions meant that a narrative 'grapevine' ruled the development pipeline, and it was controlled by privileged executive and agency 'insiders'.

22 BaselineFT's FilmTracker service is only the most recent way in which those in charge of film and television content control what is developed. In essence, the online FilmTracker service controls which scripts are gossiped about and how; and – more importantly – who participates in generating the resulting buzz. BaselineFT's FilmTracker Tracking Service, http://www.filmtracker.com [accessed 20 May 2005].

23 'Totally unauthorized', http://www.filmhacks.blogspot.com [accessed 20 May 2005].

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experience onscreen on the one hand and marketing on the other has become blurred. This is arguably because no single media platform in the new conglomerates is now capable of financially 'carrying' a project solely with its limited media-specific (film vs television vs cable vs DVD vs online vs videogame, and so on) revenues. This new reality affects both the financing and the distribution of screen content. On the financing side, all primetime US television series and feature films are now financed by amortizing costs across multiple media formats and distribution venues. At the same time, on the distribution side, each iteration of a new film or series must now obsessively work to 'cross-promote' and market the other multimedia iterations of the same show. The WGA strike, conglomerate posturing and National Labor Relations Board rulings in 2007-08 exposed the extent to which the ostensible 'creators' of primetime content were also directly involved in creating online marketing content for the network and the studios. Twenty years ago, to say that marketing had merged with creative content might have suggested two minor industrial practices: product placement and infomercials. Today all films and series market other versions of the same films and series in various franchises and brands. Fake blogs and websites by studios and networks only seem to work if there is considerable critical, theoretical and economic investment in creating complex, challenging onscreen narratives that fans want to deconstruct in a multimedia environment. In effect, for fan and scholar alike, the screen text has turned itself inside out. Marketing is at the heart of corporate theorizing, since profitability now requires visibility above the multichannel clutter via the construction of critical distinction for a title – a task once performed by critics – well before a film or series hits the screen.

All screenplays are also business plans. This is an oft-repeated adage. Because film and television are so capital intensive, a script also functions as a financial prospectus, a detailed investment opportunity and a corporate proposal. Specifically, any screenplay or project developed for primetime television or for a feature film today generates considerable involvement at the earliest story sessions and producers' meetings on the part of personnel from the firm's financing, marketing, coproduction, distribution, merchandising and new media departments or divisions. Such preproduction analyses seek to ensure that any new project will create income-producing properties (reiterations of the original concept) that can be consumed via as many different human sensory channels as possible. That is, story ideas will be developed as diversified entertainment properties that can be: seen (as cinema, television and pay-per-view); heard (as soundtracks, CDs and downloads); played (as videogames); interacted with (as linked online sites); ridden (as themepark attractions); touched (as mobile phones and pod-casts); and worn (as merchandise). Little is given the go-ahead for production unless there are compelling prospects for financial success in each or most of these (now integrated) market areas. A systematic 'story

economy', therefore, characterizes both the front end (preproduction and production phases) and back end (distribution and exhibition phases) of any film or television project. On the front end, each written scene (characters, settings and actions) presupposes very specific material resources, logistical needs and budgetary resources. Production managers then step in systematically to 'break down' scripts and scenes into cost-effective shooting schedules (usually with scenes shot out of sequence to minimize the number of locations and actor calls needed). Script breakdowns also result in a line-item budget allocation for labour, technologies, material costs and locations. An elaborate boilerplate form of economic analysis greets each script considered by a major studio, production company or network. Off-the-shelf software now makes this process of calculation (script breakdown, budgeting and scheduling) a task that can be performed by rote and with disinterest. At the back end of the story economy, each scene presupposes very specific end-uses that can be tied to the economic prospects of different demographic markets, and simultaneous or sequential distribution 'windows'. In a sense, the company or network that evaluates and develops pitch and story ideas weaves the 'imagined narrative world' of the screenwriter-as-author together with an 'imagined financial world' of the screenwriter/producer-as-entrepreneur.

One way to crack these integrated, closely held, theorizing practices (narratives as business models) is for scholars to gather systematically, map and analyze the many ancillary and repurposed screen artefacts – electronic press kits, film trailers, demo tapes, network promos, studio previews, broadcast interstitials, 'making-ofs' and branding tapes – that churn around and reference the ostensibly 'primary' screen text before, during and after the release of a film or series. These 'para-texts' or 'ephemeral texts' do not simply represent systematic extensions and permutations of the featured screen text; they also function as explicit critical interrogations – albeit staged and overdetermined ones – of the primary texts.

Collapsing barriers between producers and consumers. Those who design sets, write scripts, direct scenes, shoot images and edit pictures also participate fully in the economy, political landscape and educational systems of culture and society as a whole, even though scholars tend to disregard producer/audience flipflopping. Above-the-line producers, directors and executives are especially good at intentionally confusing the audience/producer split. In a contentious production meeting, arguments that the audience wants this or wants that trump all others – at least if the person saying it has enough institutional power to ignore evidence to the contrary. Television creators dialogue with viewers via mobile content and 'snack TV' for handheld 'third screens'.[24] At the same time, online blogs 'by' series characters help viewers solve plotline mysteries before sending them back to the next episode. Finally, production personnel circulate publicly in consumer culture, and few film and television professional organizations shy away from public

24 With television viewing and box office declining, many entertainment providers began developing content that could be efficiently dispersed to mobile phone users. The use of mobile phones for film and television consumption follows concerted industrial efforts to find and harness a 'third screen' in the viewer's hands. This is sometimes referred to as 'snack TV'. The television and the personal computer are deemed the other two screens.

exposure. Many industry associations and production guilds have 'speakers' bureaux', 'educational divisions' and publicized internship opportunities'. Other companies cultivate and interact with the public through timely media events, or by cosponsoring local quasi-Sundance film festivals. Colleges host alumni meetings in LA for industry networking (that is, fundraising) and mount 'Alumni in Hollywood' issues of alumni magazines. Far from LA and New York, film and television professionals circulate as short-term artists in residence, while film and video equipment companies, star directors of photography, editors and directors travel widely to participate in regional production workshops and technical demonstrations. All of these producer-as-audience initiatives work to merge audience identification with industrial identity, and to make industrial theorizing more accessible to scholars than in the past. The widespread network/studio practices of planting fake personal videos by supposed 'fans' on MySpace and YouTube in order to virally market forthcoming features, or of harvesting antagonistic personal video 'mashes' on the same sites as part of anti-marketing campaigns, underscore just how much the line between producer and consumer has become blurred.[25] Producers generate faux-amateur content, buy and distribute amateur content professionally, provide online learning in film and video aesthetics, spin blogs and online discussions, spoil ostensible secrets by stealth marketing, defame competitors, pose as fans, reward fans – and *are* fans. Scholars do not have to work very hard to locate these forms of worker and industrial theorizing, since they provide the very mechanisms through which producers dialogue with audiences in the many 'contact zones' that now connect the two sides.

These six examples undercut some popular cliches about screen production, the first of which is surely William Goldman's classic taunt that 'nobody knows anything in Hollywood'. As indicated above, industry professionals know a great deal about the industry, the screen and screen culture, and spend considerable time, money and effort complicating, elaborating and commoditizing that industry knowledge for the trade and the public. What the industry does not know quite as well, however, is what the audience will ultimately do in response to its distributed titles. This is why studios over-produce and over-market titles, so as to increase their chances of success in the face of the over-supply of multiplatform and multichannel choices. This approach 'builds in' and rationally accommodates the inevitable failure rate in distribution; and also spurs endless theorizing justifications to bosses, stockholders and the trade press about what went 'wrong' or 'right'. It may be argued, in fact, that the degree of industrial 'theorizing' about the audience increases, alongside industry's marketing research, in direct proportion to the rise in audience unruliness and choice.[26]

In addition, the practices outlined here cast doubt on the notion that there is a clean, unequivocal 'inside' to the screen industry to which

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scholars must gain access in order fully to understand 'what is actually going on'. My fieldwork suggests that one can only grapple with the seemingly endless layers of cultural and institutional mediations that manage movement from the 'outside' to the 'centre'. It is, in any event, entirely unclear whether such a centre actually exists: arguably, the mediating layers *are* the industry. Finally, these practices here suggest that screen scholars should consider the possibilities and problems of human subjects research when analyzing screen phenomena. This goes beyond the question of power *vis-à-vis* subjects (whether one 'studies up' or 'studies down'). In screen production cultures, human behaviours and personal disclosures are systematically choreographed and preemptively staged for public analysis. Clearly, we need to integrate other mid-level ethnographic perspectives and tools within macroeconomic and microtextual methods if we hope better to understand this slippery, conflicted institutional terrain. Such methods would acknowledge the rich and instrumental roles that material culture, social networking, trade artefacts and socioprofessional rituals play as strategic corporate and economic business practices that 'author' screen texts.

Three correctives come to mind. Firstly, the kind of close, suspicious, systematic textual analysis mastered in film studies provides a useful way to study these institutionalized forms of 'behind-the-scenes' disclosures – on terms other than their own. Secondly, unsettling as it might be, we need to develop better ways of bringing media professionals to the table. After all, the media industries themselves are research-driven enterprises, with workforces that value graduate degrees and professionals who now enter academe and launch media departments regardless of whether or not they are welcomed by critical media scholars. This kind of dialogue would enable us to discern areas of common and divergent interest, but would also provide at least a minimal opportunity to compare our assumptions and findings with those of the industry. Sometimes our insights about the screen are profoundly different from those of the industry; at other times we celebrate 'discoveries' that industry deems rather banal and self-evident. Thirdly and finally, adding industrial perspectives to screen studies is not a one-way street. The vast literature from industrial film history needs to be considered by those sociologists and anthropologists who are now turning to the study of media production. After all, for over half a century film historians have systematically, and with scant acknowledgement, tilled much of the very terrain with which contemporary media industries researchers and media anthropologists are now concerned. Reframing research is all very well, but there is no need to reinvent the field entirely.

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On governmentality and screens

LEE GRIEVESON

In lectures and seminars at the Collège de France in 1978 and 1979, the philosopher and historian Michel Foucault delineated a project to investigate 'The government of one's self and of others', pursuing what his initial course summary described as 'an in-depth inquiry concerning the history not merely of the notion but even of the procedures and means employed to ensure, in a given society, the "government of men"'. In doing so, Foucault described a 'rationality of government', or, in his now widely used neologism 'governmentality', as a system of thinking about the nature and goals of government, where 'government' itself is defined 'in the broad sense of techniques and procedures for directing human behaviour'. 'To govern, in this sense', he wrote in a short essay called 'The subject and power', 'is to structure the possible field of action of others'; elsewhere he talked and wrote about government as the shaping of the conduct of the self.[1]

One of his central lines of inquiry, in the classroom and in scattered writings and interviews, was the question of how power was exercised – how the actions of selves and others were shaped – in societies whose modernity was bound up with their commitment to liberal government. Liberal governmental rationality, Foucault argued, placed 'at the centre of its concerns the notion of population and the mechanisms capable of ensuring its regulation', a process carried through the invention of, and experimentation with, ways of knowing, calculating and mobilizing individual bodies and populations.[2] (In this light, Foucault's earlier investigations of the human sciences, of health, of the prison and of sexuality could be recast as aspects of this genealogy of liberal governmentality.) Yet integral to this *regulation* was an ongoing reflection in liberal thought on the proper limits of state government and how to rationalize the exercise of power. Ideas and practices of 'freedom'

1 Michel Foucault, 'Security, territory and population', in Paul Rabinow (ed.), *Michel Foucault: Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984: Volume I, Ethics* (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 67; Foucault, 'On the government of the living', in ibid., p. 81; Foucault, 'The subject and power', in Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 21.

2 Foucault, 'Security, territory and population', p. 67.

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3 Foucault, 'Governmentality', in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), in particular pp. 99–103.

4 Patrick Joyce, *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the Modern City* (New York, NY: Verso, 2003), p. 15.

5 Foucault, 'The political technology of individuals', in Luther Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton (eds), *Technologies of the Self: a Seminar with Michel Foucault* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1988), pp. 145–62.

6 George W. Bush, cited in James Hay and Mark Andrejevic, 'Introduction: toward an analytic of governmental experiments in these times: homeland security as the new social security', *Cultural Studies*, vol. 20, nos 4–5 (2006), p. 341.

and of *laissez faire* economic and political management were central to the self-definition of liberal governance.[3] Liberalism was founded on what Patrick Joyce has termed an 'agonism' of freedom, an invitation to freedom alongside the anxiety that such freedom would overwhelm governmental order.[4]

Anxieties about the slippery dynamics of freedom and security would underpin the establishment of 'mechanisms of security' (for example social welfare, the regulation of popular cultures, the more recent creation in the USA of a 'Department of Homeland Security' amidst increased surveillance of populations). And, crucially, such anxieties about rights and responsibilities would inform the elaboration of 'technologies of the self' whereby individuals would bring themselves into conformity with the ideals of the autonomous, self-regulating and civil subject of liberalism.[5] The 'government of one's self', the acceptance and enactment of responsibilities, was integral to the invention and spread of an expansive liberal governance and its contemporary neoliberal incarnations. No less a political theorist than George W. Bush observed, during his second inaugural address, that 'Self-government relies, in the end, on the governing of the self'.[6] Clearly, everybody is reading Foucault these days.

Undoubtedly, this too-brief account of aspects of a fragmentary and unfinished work on governmentality belies its historical and conceptual complexity; yet so be it for now. I will in any case return to the import of this work to argue for its usefulness for projects of screen studies, to propose that this work on liberal governmental rationalities in particular can open up new ways of understanding the role and function of media cultures as aspects of liberal (and neoliberal) governance and the concomitant cultural shaping of self-regulating citizens and populations. This short essay will concentrate on film, though I will draw on work from television studies, cultural studies and cultural history (and part of my argument will indeed be that this conceptual work forces us to think across medium-specific boundaries).

Yet before pursuing that, it is worth pausing briefly to elaborate the conceptual intervention proposed by Foucault's work for the dominant conceptions of the functioning of power and the subject, particularly those articulated in the Marxist and psychoanalytic scholarship at the time of Foucault's writing and teaching. There is a certain value to this task in the context of the fiftieth anniversary of *Screen*, for it was a fusion of Marxism and psychoanalysis that underpinned the elaboration of what came to be called '*Screen* Theory', and that had a decisive effect on the shaping of film scholarship and curricula as film studies programmes proliferated in the humanities in higher education throughout the 1970s. The discipline of film studies (as scholarship and as pedagogy) was shaped in important ways by these conceptual models of ideology, subjectivity and representation. Even though it is now routine to (mildly) dismiss this tradition – attention to empirical audiences or the much trumpeted 'historical turn', it is often claimed, are ways out of the

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'impasse' of *Screen* Theory – it still informs the routine critical practices relating to textual analysis and the interpretation of representation and ideology that pervade scholarship in the field. If, as Foucault often remarks, genealogy frequently begins from a question asked in the present, I propose here a very brief genealogy of the formation of *Screen* Theory as a political modernism, and of the different forms of critical thought that were marginalized as film theory and studies became tied to particular intellectual traditions, in order to begin thinking about how our present moment presents new possibilities for intellectual enquiry and engagement with different traditions of scholarship.

It is by now an oft-told story, a sort of foundational myth for a discipline often understood from within as radical: starting most notably from the early 1970s, a group of left-leaning humanities scholars developed in the pages of *Screen* a dizzying and influential blend of Marxism, psychoanalysis and semiotics that ultimately positioned mainstream cinema as an 'ideological apparatus'. Louis Althusser, Antonio Gramsci and Bertolt Brecht frequently bumped into each other on the pages of the journal; and intellectuals interested in film, among them Ben Brewster and Geoffrey-Nowell Smith, spent time translating Althusser and Gramsci (between 1974 and 1977 Brewster and Nowell-Smith also served consecutively as *Screen* editors). Althusser's rethinking of the Marxist thesis of economic determination was particularly important. In work throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Althusser had argued that 'superstructures' (legal/political and ideological practices) had a greater effect on the social formation than previous Marxist scholarship had suggested, even if the economy determined that formation 'in the last instance'.[7] In his widely read essay 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', for example, Althusser argued that the reproduction of the conditions of production is maintained by the 'reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for the workers', that is the work of 'Ideological State Apparatuses', including churches, schools, the family, the communications media and 'the cultural ISA (Literature, the Arts, sports, etc.)'.[8]

Althusser's work increasingly utilized psychoanalysis to explain how ideology shapes or 'authors' subjectivity. To do so, he drew in particular on Jacques Lacan's structuralist reworking of Freud to propose that ideology 'interpellates' – that is, addresses, appeals to – an individual as a free and unified subject, but that this position is an 'imaginary' one, masking the 'real conditions of existence.'[9] 'Ideology is indeed a system of representations', Althusser wrote, 'but in the majority of cases these representations have nothing to do with "consciousness". . . . They are perceived-accepted-suffered cultural objects and they act functionally on men via a process that escapes them.'[10] Lacan supplied, for Althusser and many others in his wake, what seemed to be an elucidation of the recognition/misrecognition structures associated with ideology. The connections drawn between ideology and the Unconscious shaped the development of a *Screen* Theory that focused on the question of the

7 Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (notes toward an investigation)', in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 1971), p. 130.

8 Ibid., pp. 128, 137.

9 Ibid., p. 162.

10 Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), p. 233.

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11 On this configuration of film theory, see D.N. Rodowick, *The Crisis of Political Modernism: Criticism and Ideology in Contemporary Film Theory* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988); and on the work in *Screen* in particular, see Philip Rosen, '*Screen* and 1970s film theory', in Lee Grieveson and Haidee Wasson (eds), *Inventing Film Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

12 For a more detailed consideration of Foucault's work on psychoanalysis, see Lee Grieveson, '"The death of psychoanalysis"?: Foucault on Lacan', *New Formations*, no. 31 (1997), pp. 189–201.

13 Foucault, 'The subject and power', p. 221.

14 Foucault, 'Governmentality', p.103.

15 Nikolas Rose, 'Governing "advanced" liberal societies', in Thomas Osborne, Andrew Barry and Nikolas Rose (eds), *Foucault and Political Reason* (London: UCL Press, 1996).

spectator, conceived as a textually implicated subject.[11] In a watered-down version, this conception of the functioning of the Unconscious and of ideology underpins the myriad readings of representation as ideology that shape much (stale, repetitive, predictable) work in the field.

In work throughout the 1970s on the prison, sexuality and, towards the end of the decade, on governmentality, Foucault articulated a conception of power that diverged from the then dominant Marxist model of ideology and its connection to the State, and likewise proposed, if at times sketchily, a different understanding of the interconnection of subjects and power than that articulated in the fusion of Marxism and psychoanalysis.[12] Written in the context of a post-'68 breakdown of Marxist orthodoxies, partly stimulated by the influence of Eastern European dissidents (many of whom Foucault welcomed to France), this work claimed that power was not located solely in the State and that the economic infrastructure of capitalism did not determine the varied operations of power. The formulation of the work on governmental rationalities made this intervention clearer, for the argument that power shifted from a juridico-discursive form – where power was concentrated in a central source – to a more all-pervasive focus on populations implicitly critiqued the conception of the functioning of the State in Marxist analysis.

The realms of government and the State, Foucault argued, were (and are) not coterminous. '"Government",' he observed in a note on the history of the term and practice, 'did not refer only to political structures or to the management of states; rather it designated the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed.'[13] Foucault's research on the history of prisons and of sexuality, for example, suggested that this direction of conduct pervaded the social body; that it did not emanate from a centre; that tasks initially taken up outside the State were only later taken over by the State (what Foucault called a 'governmentalization' of the State);[14] and that the direction of conduct was not directly or univocally tied to economic goals (even if they were frequently interconnected). As a further exploration of the genealogy of this intellectual moment, it is worth noting also that Foucault's work on governmentality was articulated in the context of the full force of neoliberal governmental rationalities that had ushered in, by the 1970s, a series of profound shifts in conceptions of government and corresponding conceptions of selfhood. These ideas included the belief that the State had grown too big and inefficient, that many projects of governance could be better undertaken by the private sector, that welfare liberalism should be rolled back, and that government should produce an entrepreneurial self and an 'enterprise culture'.[15] Again, genealogy starts from a question asked in the present.

If Foucault's analysis was here partly a historical one, ultimately about the formation of liberal governmentality and its rearticulation as neoliberalism, it was also necessarily a conceptual one, for it was predicated on a revision of contemporary Marxist scholarship's

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16 Michel Foucault, 'Truth and power', in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977* (New York, NY: Pantheon, 1980), p. 118.

17 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume I: an Introduction* (1976), trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 1990), in particular pp. 118–47.

18 Ibid., p. 143.

19 Michel Foucault 'Technologies of the self', in Martin et al. (eds), *Technologies of the Self*, pp. 16–49; *The Use of Pleasure: the History of Sexuality, Volume II* (New York, NY: Pantheon, 1985); *The Care of the Self: the History of Sexuality, Volume III* (New York, NY: Random House, 1988).

20 Michel Foucault, 'What is an author?', *Screen*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1979), pp. 13–34.

21 Annette Kuhn, *Cinema, Censorship, Sexuality, 1909–1925* (London: Routledge, 1988); Linda Williams, *Hardcore: Power, Pleasure, and 'The Frenzy of the Visible'* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989); Elli Hanson (ed.), *Essays on Queer Theory and Film* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990).

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understanding of the functioning of ideology and of the Hegelian traces of essentialism therein. In an interview in 1977, Foucault delineated three problems with the notion of ideology: 'it always stands in virtual opposition to something else which is supposed to count as truth'; it 'necessarily' refers 'to something of the order of the subject'; and ideology stands in a 'secondary position relative to something which functions as its infrastructure, as its material, economic determinant'.[16] Ideological critique poses a series of conceptual difficulties, then, because it presumes that the real can be known outside of its representations, and because it presupposes either the idealist subject of philosophy, imbued with a consciousness ready to be worked upon, or a 'hermeneutics of the subject' – that is, the idea that there was a central truth to the subject that could be revealed by knowledge (and that this could free the subject from power or, in part, repression, as Marxism and psychoanalysis proclaimed).

In this latter sense, Foucault's disputation of the model of ideology and the subject dovetailed with his critique of psychoanalysis, articulated most clearly in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, in which he proposed that Freud marked the culmination of a hermeneutics of the subject which located the truth of the subject in sexuality and rendered this truth 'knowable'.[17] Psychoanalysis stands alongside other human sciences that delineated the truths of subjectivity and that were enmeshed with a 'bio-power' or liberal governmentality increasingly focused on the understanding of individuals and populations – bringing 'life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations' – as a necessary step in regulating and managing them.[18] The second and third volumes of the *History of Sexuality*, published after Foucault's death, trace a history of subjectification beyond hermeneutics, both decoupling 'technologies of the self' from the modes of subjection central to liberal governmental rationalities and the human sciences and tracing the history of their interconnection.[19]

The ramifications of the critique of ideology and of psychoanalysis for film theory and film studies were not considered in any great detail within the discipline. Foucault's work was occasionally engaged with – his essay on authorship was published in *Screen*, for example, and those engaged in debates about the auteur considered it;[20] his work on sexuality informed important work on censorship, pornography and queer theory (where Judith Butler's reworking of Foucault was particularly influential).[21] Yet for film studies, engagement with the conceptual work on power and the subject was largely avoided, effected perhaps by the dominance of Althusserian and Lacanian paradigms and their importance to the discipline's proliferation in humanities faculties (where a 'radical' self-identity helped to define its place in the university).

The contemporaneous formation of undergraduate and graduate programmes in film studies produced scholars well versed in *Screen* Theory; and continuing pedagogical pressures – as the study of film, television and new media proliferates within various departments in

universities – push textual and interpretive analysis to the fore of what frequently happens in classrooms. Shifting attention away from the analysis of textual regimes, whose influence on consciousness is invariably imagined as ideological, can lead us to ask different research questions and to frame different objects of analysis. Ultimately, I want to propose that engagement with governmental rationalities can lead to a more thorough and precise reckoning with the place screen cultures have played in the government of self and others, in the formation of self-regulating liberal subjects and populations capable of civic and productive conduct.

Models for this scholarly work do exist, notably in traditions of cultural studies and cultural history, where a number of scholars have engaged in particular with the work on governmental rationalities to propose and model new methods of cultural analysis. I want to suggest that film studies can usefully draw upon this work, so becoming repositioned as part of a broader cultural history (we might call this, in the present context, 'screen studies'). What questions, what objects of analysis, what conceptions of the work of culture have been enabled by this engagement with governmentality? Collectively, this work examines culture as a regime of truth practices that are implicated in forms of governmental rationality. In *The Birth of the Museum*, for example, Tony Bennett shows how culture as morals, manners and beliefs became increasingly important to liberal governmental rationalities focused on the management of populations. In this context, museums emerge as a corollary to liberalism, as an 'environment which allowed cultural artefacts to be refashioned in ways that would facilitate their deployment for new purposes as parts of governmental programmes aimed at reshaping general norms of social behaviour'.[22] Museums functioned in particular, Bennett argues, to endow the self with new capacities for self-monitoring and self-regulation.

As Ian Hunter has suggested in *Culture as Government*, this function was central also to the birth of literary education, which established the study of literature as a form of ethical self-management, a mechanism to produce civic subjects.[23] Literature itself takes on parts of this role. Feminist literary historians, for example, have shown how the nineteenth-century genres of domestic fiction and advice manuals modelled 'ideal' configurations of selfhood.[24] Culture becomes, in myriad ways, central to the concretization of technologies of the self in concert with liberal governmental rationality. This work in cultural studies and cultural history proposes that attention be paid to institutions as well as to representations; that scholarly work assess more carefully cultural policy as a way to understand culture as a form of governance; that reflecting on the establishment of disciplines sheds light on the cultural formation of governance (a project important to others in historicizing the human sciences); and that marginal and didactic forms of culture might usefully be excavated for their important roles in fashioning selfhoods and governing conduct.

22 Tony Bennett *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 6.

23 Ian Hunter, *Culture and Government: The Emergence of Literary Education* (London: Macmillan, 1988).

24 See, for example, Nancy Armstrong, *Desire And Domestic Fiction: a Political History Of The Novel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Mary Poovey, *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830–1864* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

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25 Toby Miller, *The Well-Tempered Self: Citizenship, Culture and the Postmodern Subject* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Toby Miller, *Technologies of Truth: Cultural Citizenship and the Popular Media* (Minnesota, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

26 Lisa Parks, 'Points of departure: the culture of US airport screening', *Journal of Visual Culture*, vol. 6, no. 2 (2007), pp. 183–200, and 'Satellite views of Srebrenica: televisuality and the politics of witnessing', *Social Identities*, vol. 7, no. 4 (2001), pp. 585–611; Priya Jaikumar, *Cinema at the End of Empire: a Politics of Transition in Britain and India* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); the AHRC project, 'Colonial cinema: moving images of the British Empire', is led by Colin MacCabe and myself.

27 Haidee Wasson, *Museum Movies: the Museum of Modern Art and the Birth of Art Cinema* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005); Grieveson and Wasson (eds), *Inventing Film Studies.*

28 Anna McCarthy 'Reality television: a neoliberal theatre of suffering', *Social Text*, vol. 25, no. 4 (2007), pp. 17–42; Kay Dickinson, *Off Key: When Music and Film Don't Work Together* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

29 Lee Grieveson, 'Cinema studies and the conduct of conduct', in Grieveson and Wasson (eds), *Inventing Film Studies*, pp. 3–37.

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The confluence of governmentality studies with cultural studies and cultural history informs a growing body of work in screen studies. It is important, for example, to Toby Miller's wide-ranging analysis in his book *Technologies of Truth* of the institutional and discursive production of what he calls 'the well-tempered self', and of the interconnections between the production of that self and the governance of popular culture.[25] Likewise this confluence informs work on the interconnection of screen media and political rationalities, such as Lisa Parks's analysis of post-9/11 security cultures and of media policies in former conflict states; or work on the place of cinema in a colonial governmentality and management of subaltern populations that was always inextricably enmeshed with the 'freedom' of liberal governmentality, as exemplified in Priya Jaikumar's work, as well as in ongoing investigations of British colonial cinema in a current Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project in the UK.[26] It also underpins Haidee Wasson's work on the import of institutions such as museums for the study of cinema and our work together on the history of the discipline of film studies.[27] And this confluence of conceptual and historical work on governmentality is clearly at play in the analysis of the neoliberal rationalities of postwar/ Cold War and contemporary media industries, for example, by Anna McCarthy and Kay Dickinson.[28]

Currently, my own research is pursuing some of the conceptual and historical questions opened up by work on governmental rationalities and by the rethinking of the study of cultural forms and activities and the relations of power that inform their production, distribution, exhibition, and discursive and material effects. The work is grounded in the premiss that cinema might be situated, at a particular moment (the first third or so of the twentieth century, say), as a node around and through which flowed discourses and practices of government as a shaping of the modalities of selfhood, citizenship and populations. Three possible avenues open themselves to analysis here. Firstly, knowledge about cinema was produced from within the newly formed (and forming) social sciences studying the potential effects of the medium on individual and collective conduct. Counting audiences and examining their responses and interactions with cinema was one part of a liberal political technology. The innovation of the study of cinema as a way both of knowing people and their interiority and of innovating forms of ethical self-management was formed in this context also.[29]

Secondly, at the same time, cinema was being utilized and fashioned by various elite individuals, groups and institutions as a resource to manage conduct and thus to shape populations. Widely seen (but little analyzed), a plethora of industrial, reform and government films were produced and disseminated via new circuits of distribution, carrying the films to various civic spaces – schools, church halls, factories, community halls, prisons, immigrant landing stations – as participants in a pedagogic shaping of conduct. A complex interface of education, screen culture and government requires unpacking here. Undoubtedly,

the emergence of work on non-theatrical cinemas, including the formation of a Society for Cinema and Media Studies scholarly caucus on non-theatrical cinema, symposia, websites and forthcoming edited collections, is an important development in the field.[30]

Thirdly, the analysis of textual forms can extend beyond non-theatrical and/or didactic cinema to include mainstream cinemas. Conceptual work on the production of liberal subjects might, for example, inform a rethinking of longstanding questions about the formation of norms of narrative form and characterization in classical cinema, which may be repositioned as modeling aspects of liberal selfhood. Classical cinema, it might be argued, is a particular technology of the self. In turn, specific films, cycles and genres may be conceptualized as symbolic spaces for the articulation of ideas about conduct, government and the liberal subject. Together, such films and cycles arguably do more than simply *represent* aspects of governance: they form part of structures of knowledge and power, and enact models of selfhood and conduct that participate in the production of liberal subjects.

Taken together, nascent work on governmentality and screen culture enables a detailed examination of the interconnection of political rationalities and screen media. Certainly, it is entirely plausible that other traditions of scholarly work – aspects of sociology, social history and political science, for example – may also open up aspects of this examination. And no doubt examination of the interface of political rationalities and screen cultures needs to be sensitive to the contingencies of time and place, concretizing the sweeping and provisional nature of Foucault's sketches on governmental rationalities. For these purposes, the categories of liberalism and neoliberalism are too broad and must be supplemented by attention to specific strategies (for example, the emergence of the New Deal in the 1930s as, thus far, the high-water mark of interventionist social, cultural and economic policies in the history of the USA). Notwithstanding the caveats, however, there is great promise in this conceptual opening into thinking about governmentality and the place of screen cultures within that – a promise that can productively inform politically engaged future screen/*Screen* theories and histories.

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Notes to Contributors

There has recently been a major development in the submission and processing of manuscripts at *Screen*. On 1 March 2009, after much discussion and in collaboration with our publisher OUP, we switched to the **Manuscript Central** online submission system. Many readers will already be familiar with this method, but for those who are not, it will in essence mean that manuscripts are submitted through the Manuscript Central site, and thereafter all communications between editorial office, author and peer reviewers will be channelled through, and logged by, the system. Our intention, in moving to this new system, is to improve efficiency and clarity in all aspects of the process: providing, and encouraging from others, a swifter response; creating an easily accessible history of a manuscript's progress; reducing the need for photocopying and printing.

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1. Christian Metz, *Psychoanalysis and Cinema: the Imaginary Signifier,* trans. Celia Britton et al. (London: Macmillan, 1982).
2. Ginette Vincendeau, 'Melodramatic realism: on some French women's films in the 1930s', *Screen,* vol. 30, no. 3 (1989), pp. 51–65.
3. Monika Treut, 'Female misbehaviour', in Laura Pietrapaolo and Ada Testaferri (eds), *Feminisms in the Cinema* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995), pp. 106–21.

References to *films* in both notes and main text should include full title, and in the case of non-English language films original release title should precede US and/or British release title, followed by director and release date in round brackets:

A bout de souffle/Breathless (Jean-Luc Godard, 1960)
Where such information is relevant to the argument, details of production company and/or country of origin may also be included:

The Big Sleep (Howard Hawks, Warner Bros, US, 1945)
References to *television programmes* should be dated from the year of first transmission, and, in the case of long-running serials, the duration of the run should be indicated. Details of production company, transmitting channel, country, etc should be supplied where relevant:

Coronation Street (Granada, 1961–)

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Channel 4 dossier

Screen Theorizing Today: a Celebration of *Screen*'s Fiftieth Anniversary

More than a special issue, **Screen Theorizing Today** celebrates *Screen*'s golden jubilee with fifteen exciting new essays. Under the headings 'Spectatorship and Looking', 'The Screen Experience', 'After Cinema' and 'Screen Cultures', established and newer scholars in screen studies consider key theoretical issues now facing a discipline that has been formed in the past fifty years – and in whose creation *Screen* has played a central role. Screen studies has earned an established place in secondary, tertiary and continuing education curricula and now generates new research and scholarship of growing volume, diversity and quality. A substantial introductory essay sets these issues in the context of changes and developments in *Screen* and screen theorizing over the past half century.

Screen, vol. 50, no. 1 (2009)

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OXFORD JOURNALS
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

www.screen.oxfordjournals.org